THE SOUTHERN REVIEW

Editor
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Managing Editors
CLEANTH BROOKS, JR. * ROBERT PENN WARREN

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ALBERT R. ERSKINE, JR.

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THE VIRGINIA QUARTERLY REVIEW

A National Journal of Literature and Discussion

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Claude G. Bowers
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Now in its eleventh year, the Virginia Quarterly Review has published the work of leading writers of America and Europe, and has also introduced a number of new writers of creative and critical literature. It has given particular emphasis to Southern problems, and has aimed to assess American life from the point of view of Southern culture, but its pages are open to free discussion in the fields of literature, politics, economics, and the arts and sciences.

Gerald W. Johnson's *Live Demagogue, or Dead Gentleman?*

Peter Drucker's *Underwriting Central Europe*

George Pullen Jackson's *America's Folk-Songs*

Walter Pach's *The Raphael from Russia*

Poetry by R. P. Blackmur, Lawrence Lee, and Allen Tate

Dudley Wynn's *A Liberal Looks at Tradition*

J. Donald Adams' *Elizabeth Madox Roberts*

Other Articles
Poetry, Book Reviews

THE VIRGINIA QUARTERLY REVIEW
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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

HILAIRE BELLOC has for many years been one of the leading representatives on social and literary matters of the philosophical traditionalists in England. In the last few years that position, in so far as it touches on economics, has come to be known as Distributism. Mr. Belloc's essay undertakes an examination of the moral basis for Distributism as opposed to the collectivist conception of the state, a conception which Mr. Belloc has treated in his book, *The Servile State*.

DONALD DAVIDSON in his essay, "American Heroes," draws upon his discipline as a poet (*An Outland Piper*, and *The Tall Men*) and as a critic (see his various essays on regionalism in *The Hound and Horn, The American Review*, and other magazines). This attempt to explore some of the aspects of American culture through an examination of the myth-making of the American people is a section of a book which is to appear shortly.

JOHN DONALD WADE has previously examined the work of Thomas Wolfe in the pages of *The Southern Review*. Here he undertakes a more detailed estimate of another Southern writer, Erskine Caldwell, whose popularity as an artist and as an interpreter of the South has come to be very great. Mr. Wade is the author of *Augustus Baldwin Longstreet* and *John Wesley*, and of numerous critical essays.

DOUGLAS JERROLD'S *England* was reviewed in the Autumn Issue of *The Southern Review* by Herbert Agar, whose *Land of the Free* is treated in this issue by Rupert B. Vance. The connections between Jerrold's position and that of Belloc should be obvious. Readers of this issue will find especially interesting Mr. Jerrold's views on the tendency in Europe to return populations to the land—especially in view of the rural resettlement projects put into effect in this country, and discussed in this issue by Will W. Alexander.

THE SOUTH LOOKS AT ITS PAST

By B. B. KENDRICK and A. M. ARNETT

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The title page and index to Volume One of THE SOUTHERN REVIEW will be published in the next issue (Spring, 1936).

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Norman, Oklahoma

(*Continued from page v*)

S. S. FIELD, who lives in New Orleans, published his first story in *The American Mercury* a short time ago. It will appear in the 1936 O'Brien collection.

KATHERINE ANNE PORTER has appeared before in *The Southern Review.* Her collected short novels and stories, which have appeared in limited editions in the past, have recently been issued in a regular trade edition under the title of *Flowering Judas and Other Stories.*

ALLEN MCGINNIS is a young Oklahoma writer. His first published story appears in this issue. Other work by Mr. McGinnis will appear in future numbers of *The Southern Review.*

HARRIETTE SIMPSON, who lives in Kentucky, has contributed previously to a number of the little magazines. At present she is finishing a novel.

WILL W. ALEXANDER has long been a significant leader in discussions of racial and economic problems in this country. He is Director of the Commission on Interracial Coöperation and President of Dillard University. He is at present Assistant Administrator of the Resettlement Administration.

BENJAMIN B. KENDRICK is co-author of *The South Looks at its Past,* which is reviewed in this issue by H. C. Nixon. His observations on the function of history are based on a distinguished career as a writer and teacher of history at Columbia University and more lately as professor of history at the Woman's College of North Carolina.

ALLEN TATE's third volume of poetry has just appeared from the Alcestis Press and is reviewed in this issue by F. Cudworth Flint. One of the poems in this volume appeared in the Autumn Issue of *The Southern Review.* Mr. Tate, who has contributed for a number of years to the quarterlies of the United States, England, and France, gives from this experience his judgment on the function of the type of publication to which *The Southern Review* belongs.

RUPERT B. VANCE's article, *Is Agrarianism for Farmers?,* appeared in the Summer Issue of *The Southern Review.* He is a fellow of the Institute for Social Research at the University of North Carolina. He is author of *Human Factors in Cotton Culture* and *Human Geography of the South.*

THE JOURNAL *of* SOUTHERN HISTORY

A quarterly review devoted to the encouragement and promotion of interest and research in the history of the South.

The Journal of Southern History is the official organ of the Southern Historical Association.

The contents of the November, 1935, issue:

Railroad Building in Alabama During the Reconstruction Period. By A. B. Moore.

The Reverend Francis Le Jau's Work Among Indians and Negro Slaves. By Edgar Legare Pennington.

Economic Benefits of Secession: Opinions in Mississippi in the 1850s. By P. L. Rainwater.

The Work of Southern Women Among the Sick and Wounded of the Confederate Armies. By Francis B. Simkins and James W. Patton.

Book Reviews.

Historical News and Notices.

Directory of Contributors.

The Managing Editor: Wendell Holmes Stephenson, Louisiana State University.

For Editorial Correspondence: The Managing Editor, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

For Advertising and Membership in the Association ($3.00 per year, including a subscription to the Journal); Edwin Adams Davis, Editorial Associate and Chairman of the Membership Committee, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

(*Continued from page vii*)

MARK VAN DOREN has published numerous volumes of poetry. His most recent volume was reviewed by Kenneth Burke in the Summer Issue. The group of poems included here are representative of his latest development of style. The note on these poems is by HOWARD BAKER who contributed reviews of fiction and poetry to the first two numbers of *The Southern Review*.

JOHN CROWE RANSOM, who has pursued his discussion of poetic theory in *The Yale Review, The American Review, The Saturday Review of Literature, The Southern Review,* and other magazines, and who himself is a poet of great distinction, in this issue indulges himself and the reader with an informal commentary on current poetry. The next issue of *The Southern Review* will contain a discussion by Mr. Ransom on W. H. Auden, particularly in his rôle of satirist.

F. CUDWORTH FLINT teaches at Dartmouth College, and was one of the contributors to *The Symposium,* which, according to Allen Tate, was "the best quarterly ever published in this country." The sixth member of the series of books of poetry issued by the Alcestis Press this year was *Ideas of Order,* by Wallace Stevens, which was reviewed by Howard Baker in the Autumn Issue of *The Southern Review*.

O. W. RIEGEL is professor of journalism at Washington and Lee University. His *Mobilizing for Chaos: The Story of the New Propaganda* was published in 1934 by the Yale University Press, which this year published his *Crown of Glory,* the life of James J. Strang, "Moses of the Mormons." His present essay renews the warning made in his *Mobilizing for Chaos*.

FRANK L. OWSLEY, professor of history at Vanderbilt University, has written *State's Rights in the Confederacy, King Cotton Diplomacy,* and many articles on the South, some of which have appeared in *The Virginia Quarterly Review, The American Review,* and *The Hound and Horn.*

H. C. NIXON is professor of history at Tulane University and is Chairman of the Southern Policy Committee. He has written numerous articles on the economic and political problems of the South.

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A Magazine of the New Era

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England Today, by Harold J. Laski
Pareto, by Herbert Agar
Crisis Government—1936 Model, by Lindsay Rogers
John C. Calhoun, by Andrew Lytle
Eugene O'Neill, by Bonamy Dobrée
Later Poetry of W. B. Yeats, by R. P. Blackmur
Amy Lowell, by John Gould Fletcher
Religion Without Poetry, by James McBride Dabbs
Proletarian Literature, by Kenneth Burke
Literature and Economics, by Allen Tate
Auden and the Limits of Satire, by John Crowe Ransom
Vachel Lindsay, by William R. Moses
Mr. Pulitzer's Money, by Andrew Corry
Recent Criticism, by F. Cudworth Flint
Gerard Manly Hopkins, by Harris Downey
Briffault's Europa, by Eleanor Carroll Chilton
A Group of Poems, by G. Marion O'Donnell
This Lake is Mine, a poem, by Thomas Hornsby Ferril

FICTION

The Ginsing Gatherers, by Howell Vines
Chains, by Elma Godchaux
Old Man, by Thomas Thompson
Linda, by Frederick Scribner
Jericho, by Andrew Lytle

ARTICLES, FICTION, POETRY, and REVIEWS, by George Fort Milton, Howard Baker, Yvor Winters, Dixon Wecter, George Milburn, Caroline Gordon, Thomas Wolfe, Broadus Mitchell, Robert Kent Gooch, William Yandell Elliott, Stark Young, Malcolm Cowley, Horace Gregory, and Manson Radford.

THE SOUTHERN REVIEW
POETRY PRIZE

The Editors of *The Southern Review* announce a prize of two hundred and fifty dollars, plus the usual publication rates, for the best poem or group of poems to be submitted before May 15, 1936. The award is to be announced in the Summer Issue, 1936. The work submitted must fall within the approximate limits of one hundred and fifty and five hundred lines. Manuscripts entered for the award must be unsigned, and must be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope and by a signed statement entering them in the contest. The Editors retain the right to publish in *The Southern Review* at the usual rates any poems entered. The announcement of the judges for the contest has been postponed from this to the Spring Issue.

Of lasting interest in the first two numbers:

Culture vs. Colonialism in America, by Herbert Agar (No. 1.)
Techniques, by Ford Madox Ford (No. 1.)
Art and the Revolutionary Attitude, by Herbert Read (No. 2.)
The Modern State, by William Yandell Elliott (No. 2.)
Three Revolutions in Poetry, by Cleanth Brooks, Jr. (No. 1 and 2.)
The Tense of Poetry, by John Crowe Ransom (No. 2.)

FICTION, POETRY, ESSAYS, REVIEWS, by Rupert B. Vance, Andrew Lytle, Allen Tate, Kenneth Burke, George Milburn, Caroline Gordon, John Peale Bishop, Donald Davidson, R. P. Blackmur, Howard Baker, George S. Counts, Robert Kent Gooch, John D. Wade, Katherine Anne Porter, Aldous Huxley, and others.

THE MODERN MAN

Hilaire Belloc

Lest my title should mislead I will restrict it by definition.

I write not of contemporary man in his infinite variety nor even of the modern European, but of the modern man under industrial capitalism—man as he has been formed through long association with industrial capitalism and particularly as he has been so formed in Great Britain—but not in Ireland save in the industrialist northeast corner of that island.

I write of modern man as you see him today, not only in the streets of London, Birmingham, Middlesbrough and Glasgow and the rest, but in the villages; for the whole of our state has by this time arrived at much the same type of citizen (if citizen he can be called). The countryman has become a townee: to put it more elegantly, he has "acquired the urban mind."

So defined, the modern man would seem to have three characteristics: First, he has lost the old doctrinal position on transcendental things which was that of his immediate ancestry and of which the relics continued nearly to our own time. Second, as a consequence of this he has lost his economic freedom or, indeed, the very conception of it. Third, there has been produced in him, by this loss of economic freedom, coupled with the loss of the old religious doctrines, an interior conception of himself which molds all his actions.

Let us develop these three characteristics and see how they are worked up to make the subject of our enquiry: the matter of the modern state.

With all those of my own generation (I am in my sixty-sixth year) I knew extremely well an older generation which was in all ranks of society fixed upon certain transcendent doctrines chosen out of the original body of Christian doctrine inherited from the conversion of the Roman Empire and its development in the Middle Ages, though England had been changed in its religious attitude by the great philosophical revolution of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and was positively a Protestant country (as she still is negatively a Protestant country). Those ancient doctrines which *were* retained were strongly and, I repeat, always universally held. They include the doctrines of free-will; the doctrine of immortality of the soul (that is, a permanent personality) surviving death forever; the doctrine of the Incarnation, that is, the doctrine that God had become Man, which gave to the personality of man an infinite value since it was so regarded by its Creator; and the doctrine of eternal reward and punishment—reward for right and punishment for wrong-doing. There was also retained a certain code in declaring what was right and what was wrong; for instance, if you had a wife still living it was wrong to marry another wife. It was wrong to take away another man's property in order to advantage yourself. It was wrong for a public man to take a bribe and so forth, or to blackmail and so forth.

It may be objected by some that the old religious doctrines have been retained into our own day—no: not by the average man as doctrines, that is, as certitudes. Some parts have been retained, but not the same parts by the mass of men. You will still find a minority attached to one or the other of these doctrines. There is a large body which still holds to the doctrine of immortality divorced from the conception of eternal punishment for wrong-doing—and indeed from any punishment other than that suffered in this life.

The doctrine of the Incarnation has gone by the board. You may count up a large number of men and women who still maintain it, but most of these are in the minority—a small minority—of educated men, at least, outside the Catholic body. Most of them, moreover, (outside the Catholic body) hold it as an opinion, not as a certitude; moreover, they give to it, each of them, any interpretation they choose, while the masses round them have stopped thinking of the thing altogether, let alone holding it even as

an opinion. What does remain of it is a sort of vague aroma which concedes that a long-dead individual who may or may not have really existed and who is, anyhow, long dead, provided an excellent model for conduct. This model is again a figment of the individual's imagination supported occasionally by fragmentary recollection of ancient documents, in themselves fragmentary.

The doctrine of free-will, though inseparable from practical action, has been battered down. The conception of inevitable tendencies, of an inevitable chain of cause and effect, has superseded it. The code of right and wrong has gone, too, and with it, necessarily, the conception of eternal reward and eternal punishment.

Since a man must worship something, there has been substituted for his ancient worship the worship of the community of which he is a member. There is a new religion which is not exactly the worship of the state but the worship of the collective body (formerly called England, now quite commonly called "the Empire"), of which the individual is a member.

That this new worship is vigorous and real may be proved by the test of sacrifice: that which a man worships is that for which he will sacrifice not only his comfort but, in extreme cases, his life. The modern man in millions has accepted that sacrifice. The new worship has about it all the appurtenances of a religion in their excess as well as in their normal form —ritual, myth, symbolism. You may deny any one of the old doctrines and few will be shocked, but you may not ridicule the flag or Crown, nor interrupt the Two Minutes Silence on Armistice Day; and men carry in their minds symbols, often externalized in the shape of a map or of a picture, representing that which is the object of their worship.

Now as to this second point, the political consequence of this change in religion: it may be more difficult to persuade the reader that there is here a connection between the cause and effect, for with the loss of this old religion the modern man has also lost the obvious truth that a culture is based upon the philosophy it holds. Yet that truth does remain an obvious truth. If you believe in the transcendent importance and permanence of personality (that is, the immortality of the soul) and in the supreme sanctions attaching to a particular code of morals (that is, Heaven and Hell), you act more or less accordingly, by which it is not meant that an ideal is

reached or even maintained, but that it remains an ideal and, therefore, permeates society. Thus, a man to-day, most evil in other respects, will not betray his own country nor deny the validity of its laws though he will deny the divine authority lying behind those conceptions.

As to the third characteristic, which is the most practically important for our analysis, the effect of all these on the modern man's conception of himself, it has by this time become glaringly apparent.

We note in the first place that with a loss of the sense of free-will the modern man has lost the sense of economic freedom. We note that temporal good has taken the place of other values. We note that a moral code, including property as a *right*—not as a mere institution—has disappeared.

The profound truth contained in the phrase "they that take the sword shall perish by the sword" is nowhere more clearly apparent than here. Temporal good means, in practice, wealth; and the pursuit of wealth as an end, and as almost the only end, has resulted in the destruction of all those safeguards whereby the individual wealth of the many was guaranteed. As a consequence there has arisen, through the action of unlimited competition, a polity in which a few control the means of production and the many have become wage-slaves under those few. Whether the few who control the means of production will form a stable class or no may be debated. In the immediate past and on into our own day the pursuit of wealth as the supreme god has made even the wealth of the most wealthy unstable. But there are signs that this state of affairs is ending and that the strongest of those who control the means of production are creating an organization which will render their domination permanent.

A test of all this may be discovered in the conception of "success." That idea is now almost wholly confined to the attainment of a position among those who control the means of production and are to that extent secure. The derivatives of this strong attitude of mind are as clear as the attitude itself; for instance, in my own trade of writing, success does not consist in writing well but in commanding large sums of money through one's writing. Another derivative more profound in its effect is the sacramental feeling attaching to, *not* great wealth, *not* lumps of money, but the *possession* thereof. It has become difficult or impossible for the modern

man to dissociate the conception of virtue and greatness from the posession of much wealth.

But the most practically important derivative of this attitude is the acceptation by the great mass of modern men of a quasi-servile position. The modern man demands, and is at peace in, the regular enjoyment of payments doled out to him by his economic masters at regular intervals—usually at the interval of one week. To be secure in the reception of these is his chief aim; the loss of such support, his chief dread. The modern man is not controlled in his actions by the fear of any ultimate spiritual effect of his actions, but of their effect upon the likelihood of his maintaining or losing this livelihood which he enjoys at the will of his economic masters. He has no objection to plutocracy—still less to its main instrument, a parliamentary system, the special mark of which is the destroying of direct popular action by the pretense of representation. The modern man is astonished to hear that others regard a king or even a despot or aristocracy as representative of the community; but he is willing to submit to the illusion that an assembly of professional politicians is in some mystical way a mirror of his own will. Though they impose upon him (through the orders of their own financial masters or through their own private interests as rich men) laws which he has never demanded and which he even detests, he accepts the myth that he is only obeying laws he himself has made.

Now it should be clear to anyone who will think lucidly and coldly upon the direction in which all this must move that it is moving towards the reëstablishment of slavery. Industrial capitalism, as we now have it, the control of the means of production, distribution, and exchange (and the control of the modes, therefore, by which production, distribution, and exchange are conducted) by a few, must mean that the many are compelled to work for the profit of the few. When this state of affairs has produced insufficiency and insecurity, the obvious remedies, if we proceed upon the line of least resistance, would be found in giving to the dispossessed (who have come to form the vast majority of those who were formerly economically free) security and sufficiency on condition that they work under the orders of the few. To be compelled to work not by your own initiative but at the initiative of another is the definition of slavery. Whether slavery shall come first in the form of slavery to the state before

it shall arrive at the final and natural and stable form of slavery to individuals—slavery it still is, and the modern man accepts such slavery in the unshakable belief that it is in the nature of things.

Propose to him economic freedom (which can only coexist with private property well distributed) and he will tell you that the system is impossible, giving as his reasons all manner of external conditions (such as the rapidity of communication, the concentration of the banking system, the cost of great units of machinery, and so forth), but having for his real reason the mere experience of his life. He has never known economic freedom. He has not seen it in action; and without experience of a thing, one cannot make a mental image of it.

Now the main political interest of this state of affairs, the political attitude of the modern man, his conception of himself as a unit in society and his conception of society as a whole, lies not so much in the fact that the modern man is heading for slavery as in the fact that he is heading for the consequent decline of our civilization.

That consequence can only come by degrees, even if the degrees be rapid in their succession.

In the first flush of any social system when it has reached its term and its perfection, it works smoothly as a machine and gives high results. One sees that not only in the economic but in the political sphere. When political action by public meeting and debate has been transformed into the rule of one man, that rule works at first more efficiently than did the state of things before the change. Men always welcome those temporary conditions in any change which has displaced a thing grown old and fallen out of gear. A properly organized Servile State, the units of which pursue their activities under carefully considered control imposed upon them, would provide a new security and a new sufficiency pleasing enough after the insecurity and destitution of the old broken-down social machinery inherited from days of freedom; but there attach to servile conditions certain characters which eventually lead to the progressive lowering of that efficiency which was at first not only promised but realized. With the loss of multiple choice in the individual you arrive, to begin with, at uniformity.

The loss of multiplicity involves sooner or later the death of artistic choice. It also involves sooner or later the lowering of energy. Social energy

is a function of the zest for living. Under uniformity, imposed and controlled, the zest for living declines or disappoints. If this is true of material activity, it is still more true of spiritual activity. Anyone may note how the modern man accepts universal statements even when they are flatly contradictory to his own experience. Any man may note by looking round him how this or that object is proposed for hatred or affection and then—since there is no spontaneity in the emotion—a contradictory object may be imposed in place of the first: and so on indefinitely.

Modern man has in the short space of half a lifetime expressed a mass of hatred for old President Kreuger, for the very ineffectual former Emperor of Germany, for the judges of Captain Dreyfus in the French Army. He may, by the time these words appear, have been stuffed with a similar mass hatred for the head of the Italian State.

It is customary to ascribe to the influence of the Press the cause of this development, but that is putting the cart before the horse. The Press in its present degradation (and though that may seem impossible today, it will probably get worse) is but a function of the modern mind. It reacts upon that which creates it as every effect reacts upon its cause, but the chain of cause and effect is not first the Press and then the mentality of the modern urban reader thereof; it is first the modern urban reader thereof with his modern mind, and then the Press, which is consonant with such material.

The few who have perceived these truths, the few who can contrast the modern man with that immediate, but now forgotten, ancestry of his age, know that the remedy can only be found in a change of philosophy; that is, of religion. They know further that the material test of this change and at the same time the prime condition which would foster the change would be the reinstitution of private property and its extension to a determining number of the community. But those who see this are few. It is their duty to work upon the lines which their knowledge of the trouble suggests, but it is also their duty not to deceive themselves upon the conditions of their task. It is their duty to realize that this task has become exceedingly difficult of achievement, that the difficulty is increasing, and that therefore they must bear themselves as must all those who attempt a creative effort at reform: that is, as sufferers who will probably fail.

A NOTE ON AMERICAN HEROES

Donald Davidson

BACK IN the nineteen-twenties Mr. H. L. Mencken was asked—not perhaps by a genial admirer—why, if the American scene was so much to his distaste, he felt obliged to inhabit it. His answer was curt and in the temper then prevailing. Why, said Mr. Mencken, does one go to a circus? From this, the disgusted or unheroical view, we are now far removed. A generation of biographers, historians, folklorists, regionalists, and historical novelists have instructed us in the abundant goodness of the American life of the past. Whatever else we lack, we do not lack great memories. We have heroes, and we want to possess them affectionately as a mature nation ought.

Yet on this as on many other matters our minds are divided. We are not sure on what terms we may possess our heroes. The machinery of the heroic legend is all there, for poets and orators to use, but our approach to it is often hesitating and embarrassed; or else, in the old way of Americans, we hide our lack of self-confidence in bluster, and are entirely too positive.

This division of mind was never better illustrated than in Mr. Burton J. Hendrick's recent book, *The Lees of Virginia*. It is of course a fine specimen of the devotion of the amateur or lay historian to the task of interpreting the American past, and as such invites special remark. But that is not my reason for referring to it. It serves as a text in this connection because Mr. Hendrick has gone to unusual lengths in setting forth his attitude toward his work. In his "Introduction," after some reference to

the great importance of the old Virginia families, he says, "The history of one of these tribes should have at least antiquarian interest." And a little further on we come upon this passage:

> The type of society and public life they represented has gone and gone forever. Probably there was not much in its essential manifestations that the present generation would care to resurrect . . . Only a rash soul would picture this old Virginia, with its great plantations, its slaves, its upper class, full of snobbishness and of social oppression, its less fortunate stratum of whites, as superior to the present era. But the mere fact that such an order once held sway in this country and wrought great things for their descendants is interesting. It forms a humane and charming episode in the nation's annals—a kind of quiet interlude in the rushing progress of American life.

In other words, after writing a magnificent book, which may tend to make the reader worshipful, Mr. Hendrick enters a cold disclaimer, and assures him that he need not, or must not, be worshipful at all, for the figures he has reanimated really have no meaning except as charming antiquarian curiosities. There may be several reasons for this disclaimer—among them, perhaps, a determinist theory of history, or some condescension toward the share of the South in "the rushing progress of American life."

There is another possible reason. Mr. Hendrick has the retrospective impulse, but he fears and distrusts it. He restores to us a magnificient set of heroes, but he does not want to be caught in the act of creating a heroic legend. So he hastens to assure us that he has no really serious intentions. The Lee legend, although it has a historic basis, does not fit into any rationale that he can accept. If it has no rational existence, Mr. Hendrick cannot permit it any other sort of valid existence. Whatever cannot be explained, or whatever confuses the neatly arranged scheme of the present, must be stigmatized as "antiquarian." That is, it is myth, or near to being myth. And being myth it is inutile and inferior.

This is an American disease which has afflicted more than one biographer and many a poet. It is in fact a modern disease, which Mr. I. A. Richards has attempted to describe on the poetic side. Mr. John Crowe Ransom, in *God Without Thunder,* deals with the religious side chiefly, but

his words may be used to describe Mr. Hendrick's state of mind when he reduces the Lee legend to an inferior status:

> Myths are construed very simply by the hard Occidental mind: they are lies. It is supposed that everything that is written in serious prose ought to be historical or scientific; that is, devoted either to authenticated facts or to generalizations about these facts. Myths, like fairy tales, like poems, are neither. They are therefore absurd. We are given to understand that their effectiveness can be only with some simple and primitive population, that they are not nearly good enough for the men of our twentieth century generation, brought up in the climatic blessedness of our scientific Occident.

It seems clear that if the interpretation of the past is to be carried on in Mr. Hendrick's temper, the good it will do us will be questionable. We shall doubt whether our heroes are to be accepted, no matter how heroic they appear to be, because we cannot fit them into the rational scheme to which we are committed. If those are the terms on which the gallery of American national heroes is to be established, we shall never have any such heroes. Men have never found it easy to agree within the rational plane, and Americans will never be at peace with their heroes if they have the additional perplexity of being forced to choose between ideas and emotions, with no privilege of combination allowed. This predicament might well form the subject matter of a book like Mr. Ransom's, with a title to parallel his, such as *Heroes Without Glory*. The material for it could be obtained from such books as Mr. Hendrick's or from a type of book greatly inferior to his, generally known as the "debunking" biography, which assures us that the noble severity of George Washington's countenance ought to be attributed to his discomfort in wearing false teeth, or that John Hancock was a notorious smuggler.

Yet, returning to Mr. Hendrick as my example, I find that the end of his book does not agree with the beginning, and in not so agreeing, it illustrates another part of the divided mind that American writers exhibit toward American heroes. Mr. Hendrick, after all, is so excited by the Lee myth that he would like to incorporate it in another myth which, despite his disclaimer, is actively at work in his mind and has a respectable status.

After giving a sketch of General Robert E. Lee—which happens to be done with somewhat less gusto and understanding than his studies of the earlier Lees—he reports once more that the influence of the Lees is "gone forever." They have yielded to a changed America.

> The desolate aspect of the Potomac shore [he writes] manifests this change. One can search the region where the first Richard Lee assembled his plantations and find almost no trace of the ancient day. . . . But a new fact, emblematic of a new time, has been reserved for Arlington, where the last of the great Lees fixed his home. It is now a national shrine—the house a Lee museum, the surrounding country the burial place of Federal soldiers and sailors, one section set aside as grave and monument for the Unknown Soldier in the World War. As one stands on the porch, the object mainly in view is the Lincoln Memorial, joined physically and spiritually to the home of Robert E. Lee by the beautiful new bridge across the river.

The vocabulary and the tone are here no longer matter-of-fact, as in the introduction. The desolate aspect of the Potomac shore becomes a poetic symbol. We encounter metaphorical terms: *emblematic, shrine, spiritually*. The conjunction of Arlington and the Lincoln Memorial, joined by the "beautiful new bridge," is brought into rich symbolic contrast with the desolate Potomac.

Evidently Mr. Hendrick is a devout believer in the Lincoln myth, which for him is sublimated into a national myth. Involuntarily, quite without realizing what he is doing, he recognizes the power and dignity of the hostile Southern myth, and he would dispose of it by absorbing it and declining to treat it as hostile. In so doing he ceases to write history; he becomes a myth-maker. The action is very instructive. For while Mr. Hendrick has earlier gone on record as a thorough Modernist in his attitude toward myth, he would exempt his own myth, the Lincoln myth, and be strongly Fundamentalist toward it. It is as if a Mohammedan should argue against the deity of Jesus on the ground that the Virgin Birth is a logically untenable and "antiquarian" idea, and then turn around and accept Jesus if Christians will call Him a Moslem.

If now a Southerner—whose mind may also be divided, yet is likely to be less grievously divided than Mr. Hendrick's—should turn this his-

torian's weapons upon him, the argument would run like this. On purely matter-of-fact grounds, what prevents the Lincoln myth from being regarded as also a charming, antiquarian interlude? The Lincoln idea, too, has had to yield to changed America and may be gone forever. The Union that Lincoln is said to have wanted to reëstablish was never really set up. If Lincoln was a supporter, as in a dim way he may have been, of the Jeffersonian notion of a body of free and self-reliant farmers as the bulwark of the nation, then why did he fight the South? Lincoln made war upon his own idea, and the fruit of his victory, represented in sprawling, confused, industrial America, is a more pitiful sight than the desolate Lee plantations, for it is hardly even a noble ruin. However effective it may have been as a war measure, Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation was an inept bit of civil statesmanship, for it put the Negro problem beyond the hope of any such solution as America has been able to use for the Indian problem. By letting himself be used as the idealistic front for the material designs of the North, Lincoln not only ruined the South but quite conceivably ruined the North as well; and if fascism or communism ever arrive in America, Lincoln will have been a remote but efficient cause of their appearance.

Thus a Southerner might argue if he copied Mr. Hendrick and brought Modernist dialectic to bear on his cherished myth. Then with kindling emotion the Southerner might go on, prompted to declare where his own myth is invaded, and add that nothing could be more ironic, or perhaps more tragic, than to have Arlington made into a "national shrine," or to have the Lincoln Memorial "the object mainly in view" from the porch where Robert E. Lee once stood. Lee never reëntered Arlington after he left it in 1861 to take command of the state troops of Virginia. His wife, a daughter of the adopted son of Washington, had to flee hurriedly from the mansion at the outbreak of hostilities. She was unable to carry with her the Washington heirlooms which formed a cherished part of the Lee possessions. These were respected by General McDowell, the first Federal invader of Virginia, but a little later the building was looted, and the Washington relics were stolen and hawked about the city of Washington, to be forever dispersed. If any gesture of courtesy emanated from Lincoln to mitigate these asperities, the Southerner has not heard of it; but Lincoln in viewing

Southern secession as insurrection, put upon Lee the stigma of "traitor." And by what sort of an act, too, did Arlington pass into the hands of the Federal government in the first place?

As the Southerner reflects on these matters, his indignation is likely to rise to a point where he cannot with any comfort visit the old mansion of Arlington. In no case will he be likely to agree that the beautiful new bridge joins Lee and Lincoln in "spiritual" union. He may possibly consider the near presence of the Lincoln Memorial an affront which must be tolerated but cannot be enjoyed. To the sons of Confederates it is a reminder of tragedy, not an emblem of exaltation. If the people of Illinois wish to erect a memorial to Lincoln in Springfield, that is entirely proper. But why should the Southerner be called on to respect as a "national" symbol, the great image of Lincoln in the attitude of a brooding god—Lincoln, who did not receive a Southern vote in 1860; who was never president of the Southern states; who was, alas, though with some healing kindness toward the end, a destroying angel to them. Whatever intellectual admiration the Southerner may have for Lincoln the great man—and he may have such an admiration—he will find himself unresponsive, if he retains the traditional Southern feeling in this matter, to the appeal of Lincoln as national hero.

The situation illustrates at its most painful and difficult point the embarrassment we are under in our wish to possess national heroes. We do not agree as to what is national and what is heroic. We cannot get the intellectual and the emotional element ideally united in the single figure who will stand for what all Americans desire. The agreement is hardest to obtain in reference to the period when Americans were most bitterly divided: Secession, War, and Reconstruction. We come nearest to obtaining it in our attitude toward the heroes of the Revolution and the early Republic. But even in this field of closest agreement, we hesitate and begin to make exceptions. George Washington grows ever more faint and far away for most Americans as the image of Washington built in the homely glorification of the Parson Weems tradition is dissected and cast aside, and as the man Washington, an eighteenth century gentleman farmer, with a little of the frontier and a great deal of the Southern plantation in him, is more and more insisted upon by the historian. Besides, Washington in his

national aspect represents the difficult Federal conception at a time when it was really Federal, not "consolidated." We have progressed or degenerated from a time when a man could be Father of his country to a time when we are the Babies of the state. We have lately freshened our knowledge of Washington, but it cannot be said that we have thereby quickened our feeling for him as a hero. The urban intelligentsia of the East, the immigrant masses in metropolitan centres, the Hollywood producers, the worshippers in Aimee Semple MacPherson's temple—all these can know Washington, conceivably, in a book, as they can know Gustavus Adolphus or the Gracchi. That does not necessarily mean that they can connect Washington with a national ideal.

Mr. Herbert Agar may be right in holding, in his *Land of the Free*, that Jefferson has fared better in American respect than Washington, in the sense that he is a living symbol. Possibly Jefferson incarnates the basic democratic idea which every American feels obliged either to reverence or to seem not to violate. The Democratic Party still professes to be Jeffersonian. The Republican Party in its origin took the old name of Jefferson's party and at the outset pretended to Jeffersonian tenets. Yet it would not be far from the truth to say that the founding fathers, and Jefferson with them, are becoming more and more figures in the book, understandable enough there, but hardly to be conceived as appearing like a Theseus to aid us against the Persians of some national crisis. We have no sense of their personal presence, although we do sedulously preserve the houses they lived in and the beds they slept in, and pause to stare a moment, in wistfulness or boredom, before we finger the map that will direct us on our four or five hundred miles per day. We no longer name children, places, institutions, for them, but do occasionally use their names for things that least represent them—like hotels. Of not many counties in the United States can it be said, as it is still said of certain counties in the Old Southwest, that "they are still voting for Andrew Jackson."

With Jackson the focus becomes sectional again, but the line divides East and West rather than North and South. Whether in Massachusetts or Virginia, the opinion is the same, and is about to this general effect: Andrew Jackson was a quarrelsome rough-neck. But west of the mountains admiration still flourishes, though perhaps in diminishing ratio as one moves west of north.

On either side of the Ohio River, the existing portrait of Andrew Jackson—whether one runs upon it in an antique shop or in some Western mind—is a portrait of the Hero of New Orleans, magnificently erect on horseback while Pakenham's bombs burst in vain. Andrew Jackson represents the Western idea of the American national tradition, which is "to be able to look any man in the eye and tell him to go to hell." There is not enough decorum in this principle to suit the East, but the West has adhered to the tradition. Its heroes are men of direct action. They always assume the shape of the Man on Horseback who will ride roughshod to triumph. There is a direct link between Jackson's "Smash the Bank," Bryan's "You shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold," and Senator Huey Long's "Share the Wealth" plan. But the East just as consistently declines to admit the Western hero to the national rôle. It laughs at the Andrew Jacksons of the West, it patronizes or snubs them, and, if they grow powerful, it raises the cry of "demagogue" and trembles for the *res publica*. The West retaliates by a complete insensitivity to the leadership of the Adams family. In more recent times (aside from a disagreement in matters of religion and prohibition) the West could not see what the East saw of the heroic in Al Smith.

To this tendency there are exceptions. The Lincoln myth is a notable one. The East accepts Lincoln, but one cannot help realizing what a convenient acceptance it has been. For the East the prevalence of the Lincoln myth has meant the comfortable assurance of power long continued. There is a tacit bargain implied: we take your hero if you take our program. On the other hand, when the West, with a little less design, has accepted an Eastern hero, he is likely to be a Roosevelt, a man with some Western bullience in him that serves him none too well in his home section.

The line between East and West cuts nothing like so deep as the line between North and South. No inappropriateness is felt in setting up splendid memorials in New York City to Grant and Sherman, who though they originated no further west than Ohio, still belong to the Western, not the Eastern tradition. It is safe to say, too, that the West will not raise any great clamor against certain figures in Borglum's great sculptures for the Black Hills monument merely on the ground that they are Eastern figures. But Sherman will not soon be memorialized in Georgia. The proposal that

his route to the sea be indicated by markers was scornfully rejected by the Deep South. John Brown may be memorialized both in Connecticut and Kansas, but who dares to propose that his name be honored south of the Mason and Dixon line? The Federal Treasury, under a Republican administration, approved the issue of the Stone Mountain half-dollar to help raise funds for a great Confederate monument; but no Northern figures will appear on that memorial if it is ever completed. The plan to erect a joint monument to Grant and Lee on the scene of the Appomattox surrender had to be abandoned. Although the money had already been set aside by Congress and the design approved, urgent Southern protests intervened, and perhaps suggested to the sponsors that the monument, if erected, might not stay erected.

We are very little better off when we step outside the period of controversy and war. Outside of the East, Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain boys are hardly more than hearsay. John Sevier and the King's Mountain patriots belong to the regional Valhalla of a few Southern states; Maine and Oregon do not celebrate their names. Sam Houston in his time was a "national" figure, but he would not be well remembered today if he were not dear to Texan and Southwestern tradition. A Louisianian, arriving in Albany, New York, will hardly know for whom the DeWitt Clinton hotel was named. The upstate New Yorker is no more likely to know for whom Fort Sumter was named. The frontier West might fare better on a test of this sort. Few Americans are likely to miss the significance of Kit Carson, Buffalo Bill, and Custer. But here we begin to deal with types rather than individuals and approach the borderland of true folk-myth, wherein a legendary, rather than a historical, Daniel Boone, becomes a general national figure, as unassailable as Washington and much better visualized.

In the realm of historical heroics, where the will to believe is forever locked in hard wrestle with the will to disbelieve, the line of ascent to the status of American national hero would seem to be from local to sectional to national. If an American hero does not attain to sectional status, he has little chance of becoming a national hero. And yet, paradoxically, the more richly sectional he is, the less chance he has to become a truly national hero. Is there a practical law of American heroics, which could be stated as follows: To be an American hero, a man must be a sectional hero; but no true sectional hero can be a true, or complete, national hero.

One does not need to indulge in mysticism—certainly not in the kind of mysticism that enables Mr. Waldo Frank to discover Swedenborgian essences oozing from the geography and history of the United States—in order to see a principle of equilibrium involved here, somewhat like the conception embodied in our Federal constitution. Theoretically, the only kind of really national hero we can have ought to be a hero who embodies the Federal conception. But that sphere is too abstract for a hero to thrive in it. Heroics there are dangerous to the principle of equilibrium which is vital to the American conception of the nation. The Federal sphere will accommodate the statesman, but not the hero, in the epical and tremendous sense. For that reason it may be that Americans have turned instinctively, during the latter part of their history, to presidents who were distinguished but not too distinguished. On the other hand, the sections, which embody culturally related groups of states and have approximate unity of feeling, are the true home of the particular and definite characteristics out of which arises the grand type, the hero. The sections, and within them the localities, are the true mothers of heroes, and our problem is how to venerate our heroes without disturbing the national equilibrium.

In practical affairs the problem is generally handled by a technique of compromise. Party leaders recognize the overwhelming importance of sectional predisposition. For presidential candidate they will choose a man who has enough sectional appeal to carry his own section, but not so much sectional difference that he will repel the other sections.

When compromise fails, the sectional clash occurs that is familiar to the student of American history. If the heroes are living and embody sectional feelings that will stop at nothing, there is nothing to do but have a show of strength. But if the heroes are dead and thus about to enter the realm of myth, we may witness a curious sort of adjustment. The Northerner may attempt to annex the Southern hero, as Mr. Hendrick does, by distilling out of him most of his sectional essence. (It will be noted that in *The Lees of Virginia* Mr. Hendrick plays up the nation and the state and plays down the section—the South). Some years ago Gamaliel Bradford attempted a similar feat in *Lee the American*. But his attempt to capture Robert E. Lee did not go far beyond the title of his book, which in its details does not bear out his implied claim. On the Northern side, this

kind of adjustment comes easier than it does in the South, for the victor can afford to be generous.

On the Southern side, adjustment often takes a different form, which is of the nature of genuine folk-myth. The Northern hero gets appropriated —or cancelled—by some depreciatory or possessive legend. There is a legend, well-known in every part of the South, that Lincoln was the illegitimate son of John C. Calhoun; and another one claims that Lincoln was the half-brother of Jefferson Davis. On the Northern side this sort of thing is paralleled by the story, widely circulated during the War, that General Lee whipped and mistreated his slaves. And there is of course a Northern story that all the finest Southern gentlemen regularly cohabited with Negro women. All these stories are of the inferior type of myth known as gossip, and their purpose is evidently apologetic and more than a little malicious.

But though they do deadly work, they may be less dangerous than another kind of adjustment, witnessed in the sectionalist who denies his own myth and takes up the myth of another section. Often enough this may be noble and sincere enough. In all sections there are invariably sectional dissenters, as there were Copperheads in the North and Unionists in the South in war times. In modern times, too, there are dissenters who might be called disillusionists. We may have considerable respect for a dissent arising from principle, but it is hard to contemplate with any great respect a surrender of native myth when it has the flavor of being done in bald accordance with self-interest only. If a Southerner who is not of Unionist and Republican antecedents whole-heartedly adopts the Northern myth of Lincoln, he is naturally suspected of having an ax to grind, and generally he does. He is likely to be a "progressive" Southerner, out for all the material improvement of the Northern model that he can secure. Often he will not only take up Lincoln but surrender Lee, so ardent will be his recantation; or he will surrender Lee the soldier and adhere only to the milder, more yielding Lee, the college president and quietist. On the Northern side, however, there is not an equal tendency to recantation. The Northerner often appropriates Lee, but he rarely disowns Grant or Sherman or Lincoln. Significantly, it is most often Lee that he wants to appropriate. The Northerner reaches forth no clutching hand toward Stonewall Jackson.

Such adjustments, interesting though they may be, are hardly good enough to meet our difficulty, and they need only to be identified to receive

the mistrust that they deserve. In the field of history our necessary loyalty to fact drives us to a continual checking and rechecking which in the end always upsets the false claim, even at the cost of spoiling some fine myths in the process. The sense of humor of Americans will not deal gently with such conceptions as Mr. Lloyd Lewis offers in his *Myths After Lincoln.* What American, whether he hails from Georgia or Illinois, could suppress a snicker at the notion of Lincoln as a "Dying God," a sort of American goulash of Osiris, Adonis, Baldur, and Christ? Besides, we are committed to a peculiar kind of nationalism which obliges us to view our great men in the national or Federal sphere with a certain Platonic reserve. Our regard for George Washington is Platonic.

In the field of myth, where regard ceases to be Platonic and becomes really warm, the heroes turn out to be sectional, and their sectional particularity is too recognizable for them to be taken over where they are not understood and do not belong. There is no better proof of the existence of a barrier than what happens to heroes in our literature. Our history books are rich with heroic material, but not our works of literature. Whitman, who proposed to write national poems, celebrated Federal soldiers and nobly commemorated the fallen Lincoln; but he left the Confederate side alone. Benét's epical poem, *John Brown's Body,* although it deals generously with the Southern side, nevertheless by its very title, thesis, and conception makes the wrong approach to Southern feeling. We have minor heroical works that deal with sectional heroes, but we have no Finn or Arthur or Roland. In our literature there is an astonishing scarcity of works of fiction, drama, or poetry that deal convincingly with Washington, Jefferson, Lee, and other great names.

Only in genuine folk-myth do the barriers dissolve or tend to dissolve. It is hard to question the national pretensions of such figures as Paul Bunyan, Pecos Bill, Casey Jones, and John Henry; or of semi-literary but folkish creations like Leatherstocking, Rip Van Winkle, Huck Finn; or against semi-historical people whose mythical images are greater than their real images: Crockett, Pocahontas, Tecumseh, Sitting Bull, Miles Standish, Jesse James. The only trouble is that they are heroic symbols of an America that we cannot recover by romantic glances and scholarly researches only; that is, not recoverable in some high spiritual sense unless

we bring the America of today into better harmony with it, as Yeats and AE strove to do for the Ireland of the eighteen-nineties. But the Celtic analogy is not quite exact. The United States are not one potential Ireland but several. The merest look at the above loose enumeration will show that our folk-heroes are also divided. They show traces of sectionalism and marks of occupation, race, and class.

On what terms, then, do we have our American heroes? Let the crystal-gazer who can peer into the hidden unity of American character give a simple answer if he dare. To those who are not crystal-gazers, a complex and guarded answer seems wise. Let us beware how we nationalize the sectional hero or sectionalize the national hero. If we are to have any national heroes at all, they are best let alone in the entirely secular sphere, where, when admired, they will secure a Platonic admiration suitable to the highly abstract device by which the nation was originally put together. And the sacred sphere, where passionate devotion has a right to reign, not too closely queried by the cold instruments of pure history, is reserved for the sectional heroes in whose images we know our better, our wished-for selves. We govern best in the first sphere; but we best build shrines in the second.

SWEET ARE THE USES OF DEGENERACY

John Donald Wade

MR. ERSKINE CALDWELL was born in rural Georgia in 1903. His father is a Presbyterian minister, an intellectual, solicitous about the well-being of the poor; and his mother is a school teacher. During his youth, his parents roved over most of the Southeast, and the boy went to the public schools at whatever place his father happened at the time to be preaching. There are tales of his having early, like Shelley, become convinced of the perfidy and dishonesty of school-masters. By the time he was twenty, he had ended a brief matriculation at the University of Virginia, and was ready for the great world.

According to the jacket of his first published book, he has been a farm hand, a cottonseed oil mill and lumber mill worker in Georgia; a cotton picker and hack driver in Tennessee; a book reviewer in Charlotte, North Carolina, and also in Houston, Texas; a stage hand in a burlesque theatre and a soft-drink dispenser in Philadelphia; a lecture-bureau manager in Scranton; night cook and waiter in the Union Station at Wilkes-Barre; and a professional football player in Allentown, Pennsylvania. He worked for a year as a reporter on the Atlanta *Journal,* and then, auctioning off the contents of three suitcases, he went to Maine, to live in Portland and the town of Mt. Vernon.

While all of this was going on, he found time to marry, and, once he was nineteen (1922), to write and rewrite stories and send them away to magazines and receive them back, and send them off to other magazines

repeatedly, till 1929. In that memorable year, his first published story appeared in *The New Caravan,* and the hero came into his own. He has continued to live in Maine, but he breaks his residence there by long winter-visits to his parents in the small Georgia town of Wrens, close to Augusta. And he continues to write, with no promise of abatement. All of this busy rushing from place to place and from one occupation to another with what seems a keen and proud enjoyment of the process is typical of this era—a new Renaissance.

Time, in old Florence, stretched suddenly farther backward than people had believed it could, or could have need to; and Space, after Magellan, stretched round to meet itself at the antipodes. With those great bonds gone saggy, it was hardly possible to believe any bonds any longer resilient. Only the very wise, and those who were so happily dull as not to bother themselves about Time or Space, further than to know the dinner hour and the distance to the spring, could hold consistently to their accustomed courses. Witness Cellini, contemptuous of bonds till it came to his work, to the thing he wholly cared for. Witness ourselves, reeling with the new knowledge that Time too, like Space, stretches round to meet itself. Who will keep his course in our hour? The wise will keep it as fully as Cellini did, and more fully to be sure; and the dull will keep it too, well, as they did formerly—and that is a thing to be grateful for.

But the wise are few and the semi-wise are numerous. And it is easy to conclude, since Time, which passed for stable, has proved suddenly to be less logical than quicksilver, that men too are under obligation to stand unobligated, to be meeting themselves philosophically all day, and physically as often as possible, face to face, at a point undesignated, somewhere between whence and whither. So goes our hour, as Cellini's did, and it is candor and not pride that makes it necessary to say so. If personally we are chained, we must needs dote upon those who are free, and Mr. Caldwell has proved among the most industrious dashers-about known to us.

His literary pieces have appeared regularly in the smaller "intellectual" magazines and at times in the more widely circulated ones; and he does book reviews from time to time for the massive book-review sections of the New York newspapers. He has published seven books:

American Earth	(stories)	1930
Tobacco Road	(novel)	1932
God's Little Acre	(novel)	1933
We Are the Living	(stories)	1933
Journeyman	(novel)	1935
Kneel to the Rising Sun	(stories)	1935
Some American People	(sketches)	1935

In so far as he belongs to a "school"—*pretty far,* that is—he follows the styles of brevity, simplicity and sharpness of expression, and violence of action. His world is the one standard to modern intellectualism, in which the reign of sordidness or weakness in the world is broken only by persons indifferent to all of the traditional assumptions of whatever it is that has passed for civilization. Look not to rich-man, doctor, lawyer, merchant, chief (or pastor or master, for that matter) he seems to say, for any solace; *that* can be gained only from poor-men, beggar-men, thieves, rogues, vagabonds, common liars, and so on. The formula is well known, and its reason for being, in the arts as well as in ordinary human thinking, is plain to anybody who has observed the principle of action and reaction in the universe. But comprehension does not of necessity involve a blind endorsement, and misgivings as to the over-simplification of Sir Walter Scott are not to be allayed in any real and helpful sense by reading *Ivanhoe* word for word backward.

The parts of Caldwell's writing that are most dependent upon this formula are probably doomed. The formula is faddish and topical; it is school-boyish in its preoccupation with easily shocked Miss Nancys; and, to cap all, there is little evidence, except that of current popularity, for its being basically sensible. A great artist often transcends the limitations of the artistic convention that governs him. If his acceptance of that convention is interpreted as having been on the whole sincere—and only time seems able to determine satisfactorily on this score—the artist's acceptance is rated as perhaps charmingly naïve and quaint; but it is, after all, tolerated for the sake of qualities it is bound up with and is not admired independently.

It is interesting to assess the Caldwell virtues and to wonder whether they are virtues good enough and numerous enough to sustain for very long

the impression that he is important. He is, of course, important in a certain sense—it would be impolite and even silly to suggest the contrary. In a sense we are *all* of us important—the writer of these words, and the Idiot Boy and any Unknown Soldier, and William Shakespeare, and Mr. Sinclair Lewis. The question is, and it would seem to be a pertinent one from Mr. Caldwell's standpoint, to know whether 1945 will maintain the 1935 rating of him any more faithfully than 1935 has maintained the 1925 rating of Mr. Sinclair Lewis. If it will, why, indeed, will it?

He is, as one of his advocates in New York has pointed out, "an original American humorist with a gift for selecting his material from indigenous sources, and he has an instinct for converting a casual episode into a symbol." That is fine indeed. And he develops his situations through characters (created with a tenderness unknown to Mr. Lewis) that are more likely to prove constant than either Carol Kennicott or Babbitt or Arrowsmith. His humor and his sympathy, then, are the attributes that he must look to for permanence. Whether those attributes will be worth searching for after ten years under the welter of fashionable but transitory trappings he ties onto them, nobody can say surely. A good American should know that a good vein is worth mining thoroughly, and, since journalists of the sort we know are a glut in America, it is worth remembering, in Mr. Caldwell's connection, that a man who can be both humorous and sympathetic, and who can write, would do well to get the newspapers once and for all well out of mind.

American Earth is made up almost entirely of stories, many about the South and many about New England; the remainder of it, called "The Sacrilege of Alan Kent," is a prose production, some thirty to forty pages long, divided and subdivided formidably into Roman-numeraled sections running about three or four to the page. This composition, it seems, is impressionistic autobiography. It talks first and last about most things, including God and Sex; and so many of its divisions are so very simple that the entire production may well be listed as poetry. As for instance:

> Section xxxvii in Section II, "A man walked in a restaurant through the front door and ate all he wanted to eat"

or

Section xlii in Section III, "When the daily temperature was nearly 100 degrees in the shade, and often more than that, the heat of the midday sun was maddening."

As there is no further poetry in the seven books published, it must be concluded that the author's judgment forbade him for the time at least to work farther in that medium. It was a prohibition nobody will quarrel with.

The stories deal with country and village people, among whom, as the publisher's blurb makes clear, "love is direct and immediate; hate the same." They deal, in short, with just the sort of people that sophisticated New Yorkers and would-be New Yorkers—the major part of the book-buying population of America—can at once most envy and marvel over and deplore, with the sort of people best calculated to satisfy at once the current vogue for primitivism and the constant vogue of metropolitan complacency. Here is God's plenty to prove that country people are, when not amusingly simple, quite horribly brutal; it is all a very sad commentary on the unhappy folks who have not had the wit to move to some of the nation's many Fifth Avenues or Greenwich Villages, or perhaps even Boweries. And it is all very authentic-sounding, written by one who clearly knows the regions he describes. There is no end of direct and immediate sex; there is a *bona fide* lynching with coca-cola served during the intermissions; there is an idyl of two utterly brutal white men monkey-wrenching five gold teeth from the mouth of a dead negro; there is another idyl (admirably handled, be it said) of a fine and innocent girl who, to avoid starving, is said to have been obliged to become a prostitute. The New England countrymen are in their essentials much like the Southerners, as stupid, if less violent, and more frustrated and niggling.

Tobacco Road, piously dedicated to the author's Father and Mother, has remained by all odds his most widely known work. Here he offered all that he had offered previously—and vastly more. It became evident that the effective simplicity of his style could be maintained over a long stretch of material. The broadly human commentary that his readers had become accustomed to was supplemented by a fierce and pointed accusal against the always sensitive South. And that accusal carried an implied accusal of New York itself as largely responsible for the conditions the book tells about. The book has been read by metropolitan people, particularly, it

seems, by the intellectuals, with all of the credulous earnestness that certain classes of people even till today consider the appropriate mood in which to attack a sociological survey.

The well adapted and superbly acted play based on the book has for several years kept New Yorkers and their visitors interested in a matter they might otherwise have forgotten. As ordinary human beings they have been exhilarated by the special quality of the book that the liberal courts of our time are always busying themselves to declare within the bounds of decency. They have learned a great deal about an alien and *primitive* people. And they have had their vanity flattered (never was a New Yorker so depraved) and their consciences set easy (if the people whom the Civil War disrupted were of *this* stamp, then disruption was what was the best for them). The implication concerning New York's own responsibility for the sad event depicted, few have stressed. The Communists have perhaps been aware of it, but with them it has been more comfortable to rage against the tangible South, with "respectable" human company, than to rage without such company against the intangible Order of the World.

Tobacco Road is an entertaining story of a Georgia white share-cropper of this time, named Jeeter Lester, and of his family and associates. Jeeter's farm, once owned by his grandfather, had long ago passed into the titular possession of a local *grand bourgeois*. Under this landlord and under his successor in ownership, a city bank, Jeeter continued upon the land, uninfluenced by the increasing number of his kind who flooded past him to become mill-workers in the cities. The difference was that before his local patron (tangible, and an acquaintance of his) was forced by the economic set-up of the nation into ignominous bankruptcy, it was possible for Jeeter to procure money advances from time to time for his living and the production of his crops; and after the bank (intangible, and "foreign" to him) had assumed ownership, he could get no advances whatever. When the book opens, Jeeter is in wretched poverty, sustained only by the gusto of his own nature and by wistful reminiscences of the happy days when, already hopelessly in debt, he could none the less wheedle money from his quite impoverished feudal master.

The characters of the book are consistently morons whose betattered clothing and whose religion (of a type so low as to be perhaps the chief

agency of their degradation) are the sole relics of the humane tradition left to them. But clothing and religion are not the sole relics of the *human* tradition left to them. Liars and thieves, they are filthy, lazy, blasphemous and cruel, and as lecherous as monkeys. They are everything, in short, that the human creature is when he abandons all of his restraints and inhibitions. On that account, being somehow what we all might be under conditions other than the ones we know and prize, they are in a way vastly comic. And this, in turn, is testimony to their unreality, to the basic sub-humanness of all they stand for.

A recognition of these characters' sub-humanness might mitigate the wounded feelings of Southern patriots who are outraged by the book for its depiction of their country. It *might*—with reference to the book. Whether it might with reference to the book's author is another matter; for Mr. Caldwell has apparently persuaded himself and many others, among them the editors of the intellectual weeklies in New York, that Jeeter Lester and his kind are fairly typical of twenty million Southern countrymen. It is his privilege perhaps to be so persuaded—after all, it is his mind that they are the creatures of; but the intellectual weeklies are theoretically under an obligation of skepticism at least as stringent as that governing the ordinary private citizen. And the ordinary private citizen of sound mind could never, it is to be presumed, rate *Tobacco Road* from a social standpoint as anything more than an individual case-study, a "particular," not in any sense a "universal." Shakespeare, it is said, made his Caliban, but *The Tempest* is not *filled* with Calibans, and the back-drop for the monster's appearances was not London with the double towers of old Saint Paul's, nor any other place to be pointed out on any map.

God's Little Acre is the story of Ty Ty Walden, compatriot of Jeeter Lester, and in many ways Jeeter's counterpart, including gusto and primitive comicalness. The Micawber blood in both of them stirs more vigorously in Ty Ty, and the author, in creating Ty Ty, was more pointedly conscious of Sigmund Freud, and of his own disposition to consider the Land—the Good Mother Earth—as the mystical Restorer and Savior. Ty Ty is probably more orthodoxically evangelical than Jeeter, but in the course of the book concerning him, Love, which was direct and immediate and insistent in the previous books, becomes all of these things so extremely as to

appear in the guise of something usually thought of as abnormal and perverse—not the Oedipus or Pluto or Narcissus grade of topsy-turviness but rather the Frank Harris grade, or more mildly, the grade of D. H. Lawrence. "Oh God," Mr. Caldwell writes somewhere, "give us a city where men stalk the streets day and night in search of a woman's scent. A city, Oh God, where women scream when a man looks at them and run to their husbands for protection."

Ty Ty is convinced that there are great deposits of gold hidden beneath the sandy fields of his farm, and he is perpetually forcing himself and his grown sons to dig for it. The chief result of the digging so far has been the necessity of shifting from place to place over the farm, as the mine-holes gradually spread, the particular acre which is dedicated to God, and from which all the produce (in reality none of the farm is cultivated) is to be sold for churchly purposes. Two of Ty Ty's children live away from him. One, long resident in Augusta, is the prosperous husband of a "first-family" but, unhappily, venereal wife. The other, a daughter, is married to a mill-worker in South Carolina, named Will Thompson. One of the residents of Ty Ty's house is his daughter-in-law, Griselda; and there is something about love, known to her and Will Thompson and Ty Ty (and to dogs, Ty Ty says) that most people do not know about at all. This is said to be a very wonderful thing indeed, and there is considerable implication that the knowledge and practice of this thing might well save the world, or something of that kind. We are on the grounds of religious mysticism here, apparently; and we are requested to rise above low talk of evidence, and mount the higher plane labeled Act of Faith.

For all of the book's implication about saving the world, its plan for achieving this desideratum by way of an increased versatility in love-practices was so novel that *God's Little Acre* was shortly after its publication hailed in court for obscenity. The court decided that the accusation was false, but this was not determined upon before it was set forth in the defense testimony—mostly judgments from critics and book reviewers—that the book was as pure as anything, and that the author was the resplendent Saint of a New Order.

There has been a full chorus to this effect. Mr. Jonathan Daniels, among Southern critics, has pronounced the book a fine study of the South-

rn poor white, and the author "a poet, occasionally almost lyric, whose ensitiveness to life is strong and whole, and who does not once cease to e the artist." It is hard to know how Mr. Daniels could have expressed imself more enthusiastically about Phoebus Apollo. Mr. Alexander Woolott has vouched for the book's ability to "enlarge the listening heart," nd Mr. Marc Connelly has called it weirdly authentic. And London has aken up the echo of New York's wondrous praise and set it flying. *The Times* is circumspect: "thoughful comedy," it says, "with an intensely erious moral impulse." *The Daily Mail* is enigmatical: "equally masterful n comedy or tragedy." But Mr. John Cooper Powys is, as Mr. Daniels ould say, almost lyric: he finds the book picturesque, original, vivid and triking, the characters *in* the book—there is something so naïve and frank nd sweet and childlike about all of them, that a wonderfully pleasant and holesome and fresh taste is left in the reader's mouth—even with all their ameless sayings and doings.

Mr. Powys' commentary leads back to the idea of mysticism, and it agreeable to testify in this connection that the mystical point of view bout the Land in *God's Little Acre* is more substantiated than the necroancy about sex. In this book and in most of Mr. Caldwell's writing, that oint of view is hinted at, and it may well in his mind occupy a position qual with his sex-ideas as the central theme of his writing. His reviewers ave not taken just cognizance of this phase of his work. They have recogized his insistence on sex with the discernment of a Sahara-dweller in cognizing the sun, and they have talked frantically of the bad, low, cruel, nsensate people in the South who crush out the lives of poor whites and egroes. They have paid little attention to the fact that *that* baby, the rotracted economic depression of the Southern farmer, is in each of the aldwell books set morally somewhere distressingly close to Wall Street's wn front doorstep.

For the reviewers' neglect, Mr. Caldwell has himself partly to thank. is surely evident to him that they cannot be expected to recognize any eme other than that of sex unless it is stated with ultimate vigor. He has ot so stated this theme, and he is in truth doubtless himself somewhat uddled about it. The son of a roving minister, growing up in the South ut not really identified with its basic life, he may easily have magnified

in his sensitive memory some boyhood unhappiness he suffered as a kind of "outlander." He may easily minimize the perplexities, exaggerate the opulence—Lord save us all!—of the Southern *grand bourgeois* farmer trying very hard to be a country squire on a yearly income not sufficient to meet land-taxes. He knows the condition and he knows that the blame (if blame it is, in a savage world) rests in large part somewhere hardly south of the Potomac, hardly west of Pittsburg.

Conceive of Gulliver, weakened after extended battle with several men of his own sort, cast into Lilliput; and conceive of Lilliput, blockaded and strangled by Gulliver's enemies. If there was one pone to be had, Gulliver would eat; if there was one cloak, he would go clad; if there was one horse, he would ride—while Lilliputians, if necessary, king and commoners, went hungry, naked, and afoot. In a better universe, perhaps, Gulliver's great concern through the pervading dearth would be his little hosts rather than himself; but in this universe, where we must live if we are to live anywhere, it seems less in order to rail at Gulliver than to rail at his assailants and oppressors.

Yet Mr. Caldwell's persistent railing is aimed at Gulliver. And it is bitter, bitter, bitter; vigorously, passionately, fiercely bitter, bitter, bitter; obsessively, orgiastically, whirling-dervishly bitter. It is sincerely bitter, too convincingly bitter to be laid, as many have suggested, in any great degree to Mr. Caldwell's desire to ingratiate himself with Gulliver's oppressors—it may achieve that end, truly; but that, so far as he is concerned, is mainly incidental. Why, then, is his incrimination against Gulliver so flaming? What seer knows that answer? What was the forgotten thing—or was there anything—that happened one day long ago that all of this should stand momentous as it does today?

We Are the Living holds to the Caldwell story-book formula established in *American Earth*. It is predominantly concerned with rural people in the South and in New England, but the characters are in general of a fairly satisfactory socio-economic order. From an artistic standpoint it is the bravest of the author's publications; he here frequently runs the risk of impressing his audience without an eternal clanging of the gongs of wonderment and stupefaction—and he succeeds beautifully. Two or three of the Southern stories and all of the four New England stories are examples

of the robustious, gusty humor that is among the best of their author's qualities. Only about half of these few stories turn definitely upon the idea of sex and even these treat the subject with gratifying circumspection.

One of the humorous stories, "The People's Choice," is in the long tradition of anti-democratic political satire that Americans from Brackenridge to Mark Twain have at times written in exuberantly. Proud of his election as Baptist deacon, Gus Streetman goes to a village carnival on the night before his induction into his new office. As the evening flies on, he becomes so thoroughly drunk that it is impossible the next morning to sober him up thoroughly before it is time for him to go to church. He goes none the less, to mistake the soprano soloist for one of the carnival artists whose performances he had much enjoyed only a few hours since. He exhorts the lady so ardently to enliven her performance, as he had with success exorted the other lady a little earlier, that he is arrested; and the meeting is utterly broken up. The crowd follows him to jail by way of seeing the episode through, and there in front of the jail resolves, in response to his loquence, to elect him sheriff of the county, come the next election. "County Full of Swedes" is an uproarious account of the bewildered stupidity of native Down-Easters—the characters excellently presented—before the cupidity and recklessness of some transient foreigners. In most of the remaining stories the reader is asked to marvel over the mental attitudes rather than over the physical actions of the characters. The writer is apparently a Sherwood Anderson who has profited by the experiences of Winesburg; the discerning tenderness of his sympathies is largely evident.

Very seldom in *We are the Living* does the writer attain his standard degree of pure sexiness; but if a disappointed Caldwellian inferred upon e publication of the book that his favorite author had undergone a change heart, there was encouragement waiting for him around the next corner. nd if he inferred, to his confusion, from the complacency of the good Baptsts in "The People's Choice" that Southern country folks are not, after l, dominated by reprehensible evangelicalism, there was encouragement that score too, quickly to be made manifest.

The novel *Journeyman* presents as its hero Semon Dye, a self-contituted preacher who is compact, among other vices, of lechery, treachery, uttony, and grand and petty scoundrelism. Yet he is hardly conspicuous

for these traits among the other characters in this book—the inhabitants of a Georgia rural community so definitely localized that the knowing in those parts should be able to penetrate the swamps and tell the name of it.

There is a Georgia village, which Mr. Caldwell has somehow missed, to which was brought back, one clear, bright autumn day in January, the dead body of a long-absent native son. He had made money and an exalted marriage and a high reputation in his wandering, and he had quit the Methodists and gone over to the Episcopalians. But he was dead and he was at home and his kin who had not wandered went that day to the cemetery to see him buried. There was a priest crying the solemn ritual. He was in white and he had assistants; there was fine pageantry. But one of these home-keeping kin, himself as sensitive to grandiloquence as dogs are to the moon, was brought to wonder if even that high ritual, which he adored, booming reminiscence of medieval splendor, were not a sort of defilement in the clean and luminous air of that autumn afternoon, sweet with the fragrance of tea-olive. It was not *that* Georgia village that Semon Dye converted, whatever other village it may have been, anywhere.

Let the newspapers and reviews, busy to substantiate Mr. Caldwell's fame as a sociologist, spare themselves the trouble of conducting an investigation in that village, ever. There are phases of life there relevant to much of the Caldwell implication, but there is little relative to his fame as a factual social scientist. And since that is the main aspect of his work ready for the purposes of sensationalism, it is hardly likely that the newspapers and reviews would be interested.

The publishers of *Journeyman* say that the book is for all of those who admire the other Caldwell novels, and who recognize him as a new, authentic American voice. They speak broadly; it is possible to recognize him as fresh and interesting and to have admiration of a sort for both *Tobacco Road* and *God's Little Acre* without being able to summon up for *Journeyman* any admiration to speak of. The sentences are grammatical and the writing has due regard for the principles of unity, coherence, and emphasis. But one must persevere, and not admit, whatever the temptation at times, that that much achievement alone is enough to constitute a masterpiece.

Semon Dye, unannounced and unknown, puts up at the house of Clay Horey. Clay, already, as he says, "four or five times" married, has an estab-

shment made up of his fifteen-year-old wife Dene and a mulatto woman ook (whom Semon promptly seduces) and the cook's mulatto husband whom Dene seduces). There are other negroes living on the Horey farm, mong them an old woman who has charge of the syphilitic small boy earl, the son of one of Clay's former wives. These people and a hard-inking neighbor, Tom Rhodes, and Vearl's mother, Lorene, who (vaca-oning from her professional activities in Jacksonville) comes on a visit her former husband, Clay, are the main characters in the book.

Among them there is unremitting violence and drunkenness, and much mbling, at which Semon at last strips Clay even of his wife; and there a protracted revival service during which Priest Semon and all of the ge congregation, yes, every one, fall into orgiastic goings-on as mathe-atically complete as ever satyr and nymph transacted, the better to orify their deities. During the reaction that follows the excitement of the vival, Semon and Lorene escape in Clay's automobile and in the direc-n of Jacksonville, meaning to live off the intervening country by means further revivals. And behind them they leave only regret among those eorgia countrymen for the going of one who had so vividly broken the *onotony of village life*—a literary convention that originated in the iddle West, and thrives chiefly in New York.

The more direct and harsh manifestations of sex are a diminishing fac-r in *Kneel to the Rising Sun*. And as time goes on, Mr. Caldwell tends to come less emphatically engrossed in Southern matters. Of the seventeen ries in *Kneel to the Rising Sun*, six only are based upon essentially South-n themes. It seems that the first grade of the author's violence and reck-sness is still available mainly when he is looking South, but the second de is good and bloody, and at times even the non-Southern stories are that the most despondent could ask of them.

Three of the Southern stories treat of poor whites; in one of them the o is victimized by his own stupidity and mildness, in the other two, by nomic want. One man, in crazed frustration, shoots his dog, named ldler, and beats it to death with an axe; another shoots his eight-year-old ghter because he cannot bear to hear her say she is hungry. Of the ries involving negroes, one exemplifies the vulgar pleasure with which roup of "respectable" white people at a New Year's dinner witness the

antics of an adolescent, imbecile negro boy, kept by their host as a sort of court-fool. Another tells of a magnificent and perfectly innocent negro wantonly shot to death. The third, the story from which the title of the book is taken, offers, by way of establishing "atmosphere," a harrowing description of a foul and brutish landlord's obscenely cutting off the tail of a dog belonging to one of his white tenants named Lonnie, and also, a hardly more harrowing description of Lonnie's starving old father, eaten up bodily by fat hogs. Finally, Lonnie's fellow share-tenant, a negro named Clem, is lynched—as innocent as he was at birth—despicably betrayed by his friend Lonnie, who had let his racial affiliations take precedence over his occupational affiliations. That is the sort of story this is, and it is told with gruesome effectiveness—and Clem's bullet-torn body lies on the earth for the red, round rising sun to make of it what it can.

Three of the stories in this volume have to do with the troubles that assail city dwellers. Two of the characters are fine young girls (one, aged nine) who are forced by hunger into prostitution; another is a man, through no fault of his own unemployed, who is run down and killed by a callous and very rich young fellow in—of all places—Augusta, Georgia, that well-known haunt of the Crocuses.

Some American People, the last of Mr. Caldwell's publications, is made up of a wise introduction and three purportedly non-fictional reports on the state of the nation, skillfully written on the basis of observation and casual conversation. The first of these reports begins with Oregon and comes eastward via St. Louis and Chicago to Portland, Maine. The next deals with Detroit; and the last, by far the briefest but still the fiercest, deals with the South. Nearly everywhere, the reports say, there is desolation and despair; and masses of people, long since crazed with hunger, are now starving—except in New York, perhaps, which is not discussed, and in Maine, where they serve you putrid meat in the restaurants, and in Iowa, where times are good, but where people would do better to starve than to persist in their attitude of jaunty irresponsibility. The government efforts for relief have been worse than useless. Foreigners here recognize the malign capitalism which is the source of all our ills and would die in bloody strikes rather than submit to it, but native Americans, ignominious, can be bought off with thirty pieces of copper.

According to the Detroit report, Detroit and other cities of its type are beyond doubt the most iniquitous and wretched places in the world. Here the writer's arraignments are direct, and actual names are named freely. All of the automobile plants, he submits, are controlled by men whose exclusive desire, so far as the plant is concerned, is to make more and more money. In one plant this aim is most evident in the multiplication of personnel devices contrived to render human beings into mechanisms. There are restrictions against smoking, chewing, talking, sneezing, nose-blowing, and toilet-visiting. The spy system makes it indiscreet, if a worker values his job, for him to complain of heat or cold or boredom or fatigue; and in the realm of praise (which is alone permitted) one had better not lay one's self open to the suspicion of satire. In other plants, machines are speeded up without warning to the operatives—and capable fingers, snipped off, go their untrammeled way to Tophet. Then the worker must be wary; for if he loses another finger he is useless to the plant and will be dropped. In other plants the remorseless turning of the sacrosanct machines cannot be stopped though a worker is being crushed and mangled. In all the plants, there are slow chemical burns; there are injuries not seriously regarded by the plant doctors which none the less require amputations; there is unmeasured filth—one wash-bowl to the thousand workers.

There is wholesale prostitution brought on either by the threat of starvation or by the girl worker's knowledge that she retains her job only by compliance with the wishes of her boss. Worst of all, perhaps, there is madness, not acute but alarmingly progressive. One worker after another surrenders, hopeless, interns himself in the putrid and verminous refuges for his kind provided by the Plant, and there, in those virtual prisons (fair from without and as high up as the ceiling of the first floor) gradually slumps downward to his end—partly rusted out, more largely rotted out.

It is interesting to know what Redeemer Mr. Caldwell, as prophet, looks to to right these heavy wrongs; and it is disheartening to find that the suggested deity is not after all tremendously impressive. If, the prophet implies, the workers could substitute for the government-sanctioned company-unions a rank-and-file union of their own, all would be well. *Rank-and-file Union,* then, *Hominum Savior.* Two things would this Redeemer do: he would reduce the speed-up and he would install and operate safety

devices that could not be disconnected by the foreman. For his children's benefit he would flout the Essential Progressiveness of the machine, at one time itself named Savior; he would turn back the clock (*reduce* the speed-up), not hold it still merely; and while he was doing all of this he would install a machine (in the form of a safety device, but a machine just the same) so inexorable that not even a foreman could bring it to any sort of terms whatever. What this Redeemer would do to the minds of foremen and of superforemen and of directors and board-chairmen, if anything, is not disclosed. If those minds are unaffectable, there is good argument for any self-respecting Redeemer's withdrawing from the human scene to Mars, or elsewhere, with what shreds of dignity he can salvage. But if he or any of his entourage are persistent creatures, and earnest, it is perhaps written in their natures for them to remain, always, nagging a Humanity they are basically hopeless of, and to pursue their victim from time to time with such nostrums as occur to them. There is nothing left for it but to judge the prescriber, somewhat, by his nostrums, and it is grave, therefore, as regards Redeemers or their prophets, when their best nostrums are at best trivial.

To reduce the speed-up is at least half of what is counseled. In the farming South, that much, at any rate, is concededly accomplished, and it would seem that there perhaps the state of affairs would be less noxious. But that is not Mr. Caldwell's conclusion, for in the particular section of his latest book called "Southern Tenant Farmers," he permits himself a clean superlative: "In parts of the South," he says, "human existence has reached its lowest depths . . . men are so hungry that many of them eat snakes, cow-dung, and clay." He tells of a man and his wife and eleven children who live on a dollar a month, and of another family whose children subsisted on a diet of bitch-milk. Formerly such oppressed people could solace themselves with an occasional rabbit to eat—but there is hardly a rabbit left now; or, all else failing, they could drink water—but there is hardly any water left any more, either, the land was semi-arid to begin with, and everything will be magnificently bad surely, just as soon as ever the rapidly failing wells can dry up thoroughly. Then the primordial deserts will repossess it; and that would make a flashy headline, truly. In the meantime, the unhappy tenants of the doomed land, white and black,

are said to be the most sterling of people, desperately eager to work and to pay their own way always, faithfully; and they are said also to be like slum-dwellers, "the back-wash of America." But the cruel and predatory owners of all of this desolation are said to wring from it regularly a rich living. This is the case with about half the area of the state. The other half of Georgia—the section with Macon as a center—is incredibly well-to-do; "if one were able to buy a farm in that section, even a few acres, he should be comfortable for life." But Georgia on the whole is terrible; the state government is insensate and the relief efforts of the Federal Government in the state have been so bungling and foolish as to do harm rather than good, and the best thing to do with Georgia is to federalize it instantly.

The paragraph in which Mr. Caldwell offers his solution for the difficulties of all the cotton country testifies incidentally to his assumption that America will remain capitalistic. Then, after reckoning with and discarding as impracticable the unionization of farm labor, it advocates the abolition of private land-ownership, and the operation of farms on a large collective basis—like (does he mean?) the large collective basis of the automotive industry in Detroit. If that will not do, another choice is offered: perhaps the big land units could be broken up into small acreages to be intensively cultivated by one or two people. But whether these one or two people are to own the land or to keep it on government suffrance, is not disclosed.

The vexing question is to know what a common American citizen is to think about the spectacle of his country's heaping its awards upon a young man who talks so very loosely and so very much. The young man may be so personally attractive and so remarkable in mind and character and literary skill that nobody in his right senses could fail to value him; but there are certain other qualities he ought to manifest before a calm and judicious nation, or an individual, for that matter, acclaims him very notably. A harsh conclusion for the common citizen would be that the nation is neither calm nor judicious and that Mr. Caldwell (who can count shrewdness among his virtues) recognizes as much and means to give his patrons what they ask for. A more restful conclusion would be this: that New York is not America by any means, and that the responsible portions of the nation, however few current books they may buy, are far from being much exercised by Mr. Caldwell—are not indeed aware of him.

In a sense, that is a loss to everybody. Truly, it is a damaging thing to say of an author that the more one may know of a circumstance the author describes, the less, very often, one is disposed to credit his report. Much that Mr. Caldwell has written is unquestionably misleading. One of his most widely publicized pronouncements, concerning the terrorizing by arson of negroes in Georgia, went unsustained despite grand jury investigations. And many of his reports which are offered as typical are bound to be very narrowly specific. The story about bitch-milk, for example, brought about an investigation by one of the Georgia newspapers; and the result of the investigation was to sustain the drift of the story in its bearing upon individual cases of want and gross stupidity. Proportionately there was about as much of both along Tobacco Road, the investigation said, as there is normally in New York or Gopher Prairie. And the New York weeklies trumpet the acknowledgement to Heaven, garbling it to suit their own ends. And all of this is very nettling. Yet the rapid and sensible introduction to *Some American People,* (a little sermon in Travel, it is) gives evidence—as there is plenty of evidence through all his books—that the writer is a man of considerable power. And it is likely that his entire literary output would be more impressive if—a good Southerner still—he were not as plaintively anxious as he is to please the kind and class of people that he has come to be affiliated with—the detached, nervous, thrill-goaded metro-cosmopolitans of his own day.

WHITHER EUROPE?

By Douglas Jerrold

THE PRESENT crisis in Europe and Asia is the product of the breakdown
f the system of finance capitalism, which was built in the middle of the
st century on the foundation of the industrial revolution. On the political
de, the rival forces of fascism and international bureaucratic socialism
now called economic planning) are the two most widely advertised means
escape from the social consequences of this breakdown. Yet, because
either of these two methods of escape leads to a desirable refuge, we see
e shadow of domestic unrest and anxiety over every country in Europe.
n the economic side, economic nationalism offers an immediate and prac-
al mitigation of the disastrous economic results of this breakdown,
hile the champions of an internationally controlled economic order offer
diet of fervent hopes to ardent reformers who wish to cure the disease
thout taking the medicine. Yet, in the sphere of foreign policy, it is the
eat political changes necessitated by the growth of economic nationalism,
hich are setting such grave problems to the chancelleries of Europe. How
a stable social and political order to be established on the ruins of finance
pitalism without the sacrifice of individual rights or the repudiation of
ternational obligations?

The answers to all these questions can hardly be found in the lifetime
men now living. Yet Western Europe and the Asiatic powers who have
en drawn within the orbit of her material civilization, have been forced
grave peril, almost, it would seem, regardless of the consequences, to

pose them. Is this lunacy or a return to sanity? Is the present chaos a sign that the Christian civilization of our ancestors is hurrying to its doom, or is it a sign that it is struggling back to its old principles? Are we seeing the stormy and dangerous beginning of the Decline, or the Renascence of the West?

America could not, if she would, be indifferent to these questions, still less to the stirring events to which they must give birth. On the answers to them depend alike the peace of Europe and the balance of forces in the East, in both of which America is vitally interested. But these questions have an even more direct concern for her. Although the vast material resources of the United States give America a freer hand than England, for instance, can enjoy in determining the nature and trend of her own economic organization, it is certain under modern political conditions that the decisions which she will take will be governed largely, if not entirely, by the social and political conditions which she desires to realize. It is not for an English writer to recommend one decision rather than another. America will decide for herself. She will hardly, however, reach a decision without reference to the results, some already observed and the rest clearly predictable, of the workings of finance capitalism in Europe and of the social and political consequences which have derived from its collapse.

The first question we must answer is this. What was the essential of the pre-war finance capitalist system, and is its collapse due to inherent or accidental causes?

Politicians and financiers in Europe, and those interests in the United States whose fortunes were clearly linked with the European financial and industrial system, assumed for at least a decade after the War that they were dealing with a temporary condition produced by the chaos of the War of 1914. There are still, even today, many who look forward to a return to the old system and proclaim that the lowering of tariff barriers and the restoration of world free trade would cure all our ills. To such people, the return to prosperity will be signified by the return of profitable international lending, involving the stabilization of the exchanges and the subordination of world politics to the needs of commercial equilibrium and financial security. How far the world is from realizing this dream can be seen by a glance at Geneva, where its chief apostles are reduced to launch-

ing a world-wide campaign of economic sabotage as the final, if not the fatal, weapon against the militant march of Italian economic imperialism.

The essence of finance capitalism was not free trade but free money. The world was regarded, and largely treated, as a complex of "resources" to be developed. Put in its crudest terms, food was to be grown in the open spaces of the New World and manufacturing concentrated in areas where natural resources provided cheap power, skilled but cheap labor, and easy communications. This was a natural view for the English, who were largely the creators of the system, to take. It meant applying on a world scale the principles and practices of the English industrial revolution, which had destroyed small holdings in the interests of scientific agriculture, and cottage industries in support of large-scale manufacture. In the process, the free land-owning or land-sharing Englishmen became the landless proletariat of the great towns. It seemed a sufficiently logical extension of this system to go on to destroy British agriculture altogether in order to turn the whole of England into one vast factory and to develop the new lands overseas to supply cheap food and to provide raw material for our equally cheap manufactures. The same people who financed the manufactures at home sent their profits abroad to develop new sources of supply for raw materials and new markets for our exports. And the decree went forth from the Bank of England that the whole world should be enrolled into this beautifully simple system.

The result was astonishing: it was the modern world, sustaining an infinitely larger population than was ever dreamed of, and conferring on large numbers in every country a higher standard of life than ever before experienced save by small and privileged oligarchies. But we must beware of over-simplification: at no time was the process a simple exchange of food for manufactures. It is impossible for any country to be purely agricultural: even for the simplest forms of food production a measure of industrialization is necessary. For the high-power production of food for export, a large measure of industrialization, necessitating heavy capital outlay on building docks, harbors, and railways is an indispensable preliminary. There was one condition only on which these goods could be supplied by the Old World to the New; the Old World had for a long time to produce a great deal more than it consumed. Expressed in terms of eco-

nomics, this meant cheap labor: expressed in terms of politics, it meant vile social conditions.

So much for that part of the bill which our grandfathers paid. But that is only the beginning of the story. Interest had to be paid on the thousands of millions invested abroad during the half century before 1914, and this interest could, of course, be paid only in goods. This meant great profit to the *rentier* classes, and to the banking and shipping interests, but it meant unrestricted food imports and the deliberate organization of English economic life on the basis of what inevitably became the highly competitive trade in exported manufactures.

The system was workable so long as only one or two of the European countries were industrialized, and as long as the New World and Asia were not. But, all through the fifty years of finance capitalism, two powerful factors were at work. Industrialism was spreading east from Great Britain across Europe, reaching by the early years of this century, even the fringes of Russia; and the New World was not only soon equipped with the capital goods necessary to keep the Old World supplied with food, but was rapidly equipping itself with capital goods for the purpose of supplying its own need for manufactures and even joining in the competitive export trade in manufactures.

This is the significance of the statement that the essence of finance capitalism was not free trade but free money. In so far as the system was directed quite simply to the interchange of commodities on the basis that these were to be produced or manufactured only when optimum conditions prevailed, and thus the world's resources were to be developed to the utmost possible extent, the system adds inestimably to the wealth, if not to the happiness, of mankind. But the system was not in fact motivated by any such scientific purpose, but by the mere desire to find lucrative investments for capital. If it paid better, as it did, to make textile machinery for export to India and Japan than to export cotton goods, then textile plant was exported. The savings derived from the cheap labor were used to finance and equip our future competitors, who soon repaid us by putting up tariff barriers against our manufactures and so building up their own industries.

The financiers were wise to take their profit where they could find it, for the system was in fact inherently unsound. In the world state of the

ocialist's dream, the process of industrialization could have been stopped t the point where it suited the convenience of Western Europe, always upposing that the world state was, in effect, the dictatorship of the English nd French banking interests. But, in the happier world in which we live, here was no chance whatever of setting any limit to the spread of industrialization, and the catastrophe of the Great War made it impossible even o delay it. Nothing, however, can be more fatal to clear thinking than to istake this immediate cause for the ultimate cause of the failure of finance apitalism. The extension of industrialization which was forced on every ne of the belligerents by the military requirements of the war, the development of new sources of power, the neutralization of climatic disadvantages y the application of scientific invention and the manufacture of substitute synthetic raw materials—all these factors have intensified the post-war risis, but none of them is responsible for it. Finance capitalism was a holly artificial system, arising out of temporary conditions which have ng since passed away and will never recur. The chief of these conditions as the existence of vast territories, in North and South America, in Africa, sia, Australia, and Eastern Europe, which were undeveloped, and in the se of the New World, almost uninhabited. The second of these conditions is the military, political, and financial dominion of Western Europe, hich made it possible not only to lend money, but to supervise its expenditre and to collect the interest.

It may be said at this point that, after all, the transactions involved finance capitalism were to every one's economic advantage, but even if is were so—which it is not, for the basis of the whole thing was, as we ve seen, cheap labor and vile social conditions—the subordination of litics to economics which the system requires was unwholesome, unnatal, and, in the long run, impossible to maintain. To restore the system uld involve nothing less drastic than the destruction of national states the benefit of anonymous trading interests. No nation whose population pends on exports can willingly allow millions of its citizens to be thrown t of work by the whims of dictators or parliaments, by wars or revolutns or currency manipulations. Yet no civilized and free nation can allow social and political structure, its standard of living, its balance between riculture and industry, to be determined for it by its money lenders or

its suppliers. Healthy trade can never thrive on restraint of trade, because the restraint will be felt by one portion of the community, and the profit will be reaped by another. The result will be a political and social disintegration leading inevitably either to revolution or regulation. Strong vested interests may, for instance, maintain the English beef trade with the Argentine at the expense of the home producer of live stock for a long time, but not indefinitely. Asked to balance the interests of our depopularized countryside against the interests of the Argentine ranch bondholders, the electorate will, in the long run, give a decided answer. It will not be in favor of the bondholders.

The strong trend towards self-sufficiency has been assisted by the Peace Treaties of 1918, and the Covenant of the League of Nations in particular, which reasserted, and without hope of a peaceful reversal of the verdict, the supremacy of politics over economics. The cardinal League principles of self-determination and non-intervention are directly opposed to the spirit of finance capitalism and fatal to its practical working. The artificial construction of new states on a racial basis necessitated their protection by tariff barriers of a wholly different kind from those erected before the War. Political independence necessitates a wide measure of economic independence, in a world where national states are denied the right of private action to collect their debts or ensure their own essential supplies. Similarly with the nations formerly dependent on export trade. The disorganization and malgovernment of a great territory was in the past an occasion for intervention. The deliberate destruction or closing of markets, the ruin or expropriation of capital assets, were offences against the pre-war international morality. Under the post-war system these things came to be known as progressive experiments in new systems of government justified by the right of all peoples to work out their own salvation in their own way. Such a conception, however enlightened, has been shown to be quite incompatible with the pre-war economic system. As we have said, no nation can allow the livelihood of a great section of its population to be determined, not by the industry, thrift, or competitive skill of its own people, but by the whims of Chinese, American, Indian, or Russian politicians; to these categories must be added, it seems, any politician of any nation who acquires the League mentality. Quite clearly, if economic

anctions are going to become a regular diplomatic weapon, and unofficial boycotts, such as that proposed by China on Japan or by the Jews on Germany, are to become a regular custom, then absolute self-sufficiency must become the very first indispensable condition of safety for any state.

The League, however, in its action against Italy, is, even if inadvertently, engaged in fighting against its own constructive principles. The claims, made or implied, of Japan, Italy, Germany, and Poland, to overseas possessions or economic privileges represent only the first (although sufficiently drastic) proposals for readjustment which the world will have to adopt if it is to become in fact what it is in theory, a free association of sovereign independent states. The British Commonwealth of Nations provides the model for the transition from a large area dominated by the principles of finance capitalism to a group of autonomous units aiming at economic self-sufficiency. When the Indian political classes acquire power as well as office and use it, as they will, in the interests of Indian trade and industry, England will then be forced to complete the readjustment of her economy, and to force in her turn a substantial readjustment, possibly not unaccompanied by measures of repudiation, on South America and, to a lesser extent, on Denmark. The last stages of the transition will, as we can already see, be dangerous, and it is not impossible that, long before it is completed, an attempt will be made by the financial and commercial interests, still so powerful in the politics of England, France, and Russia, to arrest it, and to maintain, if necessary by force, the economic and political *status quo*. English banking and shipping interests, Jewish internationalism, French chauvinism, and Russian communism will make uneasy bedfellows, but they represent powerful forces which, though ranged behind the League and paying eloquent tribute to its ideals, are fundamentally hostile to that world order of self-sufficient states, each free to order its own affairs in its own way, and guaranteed an absolute immunity from interference, a condition which is the only possible basis on which the ideals of the League Covenant can be realized.

Yet, in the long or in the short run, sanity will prevail, because the will to peace is real. Behind the political smoke-screen, vast changes are already in progress. England is reviving her wheat and live stock production, has already reëstablished her pig production, and will soon turn to

develop her markedly rich potential resources in dairy produce. Ireland is turning herself from a country based on agricultural exports to a country of subsistence farmers. Germany is being forced by international Jewry along the same path and Italy by internationalist politicians. In both cases the tendency was there already. Italy, in particular, is already on the way to freeing herself from dependence on foreign coal, and one of the main aims behind her Abyssinian venture is to free herself from her dependence on American and Egyptian cotton.

This dramatic reassertion of the supremacy of politics over economics is the supreme event of the twentieth century. It is generally deplored by tradesmen, and the open hostility of "the so-called international bankers" (to quote President Roosevelt) to the new age is one of the few signs of political sagacity manifested by that fraternity in the post-war decades. If economic sanctions prevail against Italy, the lessons will only be the clearer, and the reaction already in progress will be intensified a hundred-fold. The old search for the strategic frontier will give place to a new search for the economic frontier, and the alliances of the future will aim not so much at the concentration of military force as at the coördination of economic resources to the point where boycotts or blockades can be indefinitely resisted.

Both as a sovereign state deeply committed in the past to the finance capitalist system, and as a federation likely to be increasingly concerned with the assertion of national rights, America can hardly be uninterested in these profound changes in the European theatre. In particular she will, unless she has lost her political instinct, beware of treating these changes as temporary just because they are not permanent. All history is a process of becoming: there is no finality to the historical process. The secret of progress lies in the power of a race or a nation to adapt the transitory material conditions to the purposes of civilization. *Natura nihil facit per saltum*. A nation which fails so to adapt itself, even for so short a period as a generation, may well suffer an eclipse from which it may not recover for centuries. The progress of the great national states towards economic self-sufficiency will not in our lifetime be arrested. The era of free money is at an end. It may return in different conditions. New discoveries may once again localize the sources of essential raw materials or the cheapest

sources of power. But it is at least as likely that the development along present lines may be so rapid and reach such complete fulfillment that we may get back to the conditions where high politics are again absolutely dominant, and religion will reënter the stage of history. These speculations may seem remote from the actualities of politics in the year 1935. But the web of history is woven without a void. In either case, the battle will be to those who have best adapted themselves to the conditions of the present age. Because the English-speaking peoples first solved the problem of reconciling the need for central government with the need of men, in the age of news print and railways, for political freedom, these people were the heirs of the new dispensation of science which, in the course of the nineteenth century, changed the face of the world. Today, without the advantage of a flying start, when it is they rather than their competitors who are handicapped by a veneration for old forms of government not necessarily well adapted to the needs of the new age, the English-speaking peoples have to solve with the rest of the European world (with which must be included Japan and British India) the problem of reconciling economic self-sufficiency with the essential conditions of spiritual and material progress.

The real and even passionate feeling which the Italo-Abyssinian conflict has aroused in Europe shows us that the need for this reconciliation is clearly realized. Europe will no more be allowed to march to its new goal over the ruins of its civilization than it will be allowed to deny its manhood by subordinating its heritage of national freedom to an economic dictatorship by the Triple Entente. Still less will European public opinion tolerate the conception of a universal servile state dedicated to the exclusive and quite unimportant task of keeping itself alive. All progress is from the simple to the complex, and if the march of history were in fact, by a unique act of human volition, turned, from now onwards, from the complex to the simple, it would only mean that the world would henceforth be moving backwards. We should then certainly be facing the Decline and not the Renascence of the West. The decision happily is not yet taken, but the time of testing is now.

Within the boundaries of the national states of Europe the march towards economic self-sufficiency is raising questions equally profound

and perhaps even further from solution. The problem is, however, defining itself with increasing clarity. We have already seen how the pre-war finance capitalism demanded free imports and cheap labor as the essentials of its mechanism. The direct consequence, in the sphere of domestic European politics, was the growth of the revolutionary socialist movement. Faced with the choice between regulation and revolution, England and Germany set out, long before the War, to lay the foundation of what is known as state capitalism—the system under which the great manufacturing interests, in return for their independence from state control, place the state in a position to guarantee a minimum standard of life and a minimum amount of security to the workers. This system has inherent defects in any age. Notably, the pressure of the guaranteed on the guaranteeing classes is inexorable and inevitable, and must in any case have ended in spiritual demoralization and economic bankruptcy. Beginning in 1908 with Old Age Pensions for the very poor, followed in 1911 by a state-assisted health insurance scheme, England had already, by the middle of the last decade, reached the point when the Conservative Party itself was promising lavish assistance out of public funds "from the cradle to the grave." That it was not so foolish as to attempt to fulfill its promise, and that the Labour Party, even more generous, notably failed to do so, only showed that the system left the citizens of a once free and independent-minded country when they went to the polls a mean choice between something very near chicanery and something little short of lunacy. A very similar choice was being offered to the peoples of continental Europe, all of whom were experimenting in the early post-war years with the same system. How the battle would have gone is, today, merely an interesting speculation. The battle was forgotten in the world crisis of 1930-2. The resulting intensification of the movement towards self-sufficiency destroyed the basis of state capitalism. In a relatively static era, the inherent economic defect of state capitalism—the destruction of the mobility of labor—might not have been fatal. When it at last became clear that the post-war crisis was not a passing phase but the result of deep-seated causes, the age of economic readjustment opened, and the immobility of labor made a large measure of state control, subsidization, and protection a matter of urgent political

ecessity if the period of transition, now seen as inevitably lengthy, was pt to lead to disastrous social upheavals.

Thus was "economic planning" superimposed on the "social services," nich were the characteristic political expression of state capitalism. mong fascist, communist, and parliamentary governments there is, in is respect, no difference whatever. The parliamentary states have, in ct, been forced to adopt the authoritarian technique by placing such atters as tariff regulation, the control of transport, and the regulation the subsidized industries in the hands of irresponsible "commissions" "committees," whose members would in Russia be called Commissars, d whose decrees, though sometimes formally submitted for parliamen-y approval, are just as much acts of dictation as the "laws" which Herr tler submits to the Reichstag.

It has not, however, escaped attention that with the final collapse of e pre-war finance capitalism the case for the denial of economic liberty s gone. It was not the needs of the home population but the needs of the npetitive export trade which necessitated the extremes of concentration d specialization in the production alike of foodstuffs and manufactures. or was it the needs of the home market but the need for consuming nually far less than we produced (in order to develop new and potential rkets) which necessitated the depression of the rewards of labor to a e subsistence level. The new pursuit of economic self-sufficiency, while questionably demanding, in the existing circumstances, a large measure state interference with industry, does, in fact, provide an opportunity the restoration of the property state, and must ultimately lead either hat conclusion or to the establishment of a completely socialized society. e choice between these two alternatives will confront parliamentary and cist states alike, and it is by no means impossible that even in Soviet ssia the question will be raised.

The reason why this choice presents itself and why there is no other hat the existing compromise (state regulation of private enterprise ompanied by a guaranteed standard of living) must prove, in the era state interference with the conduct of industry, politically unstable. A ranteed standard of living for the unemployed; minimum wages for employed; free education and health services; maintenance in sickness

and old age; these things must, for obvious political reasons, be provided on a scale less attractive than those available for at least a majority of the gainfully employed. This means the stabilization of inequality, which men will never tolerate except at the price of freedom. They will accept inequality under a system in which it is, on the whole, the genuine result of the free exercises of natural talents, but never when it is part of a bureaucratic plan.

From the point of view of the producer or employer the result has been proved equally unsatisfactory. Industry is still competitive; the home market is still free; but the system which takes from productive industry more than a quarter of its entire output to be redistributed in goods, services, or the cash equivalents by the state, restricts the rewards of enterprise for all to the point where no new enterprise can be started without a subsidy or a guarantee. Thus the very factor which justifies, and, on a long view, demands the retention of the system of private enterprise, cannot function under the present state-regulated compromise between capitalism and socialism.

There is a further defect, also already disclosed. The new compromise is inefficient. Socialism is *necessarily* inefficient only in its beginnings. In the long run, a state transport system or a state iron-and-steel industry would probably acquire a reasonable degree of administrative efficiency and even economy, just as old departments of the state like the English Treasury and the India Office acquire a curious, vicarious, but very real, experience and intimacy with the problems with which they deal and a very powerful tradition of disinterested service to the public. The superimposition of controlling "boards" and "commissions" on the structure of private enterprise has, however, been clearly proved to provide the worst of both worlds: interference without responsibility and a high cost without even the dubious benefits of "intensive" organization. The result has been, in every industry submitted to state regulation, a constant addition of new "boards" and "commissions" to regulate and coördinate the work of other boards. In a short time, the chief object of each of the different boards becomes the maintenance of its own power, and the smooth working of the boards, not the smooth working of the industry itself, becomes the end of the coördinating authority.

As a mere bureaucracy the new bureaucratic system cannot and will

stand, and none recognize this more clearly than its prime originators, new aristocracy of the pen and the desk, who see in it, nevertheless, road along which they can mount to heights of power undreamt of by of the old aristocracies of the past, to the point, indeed, where they enthroned forever on a mountain of paper beneath which lie buried whole hopes of mankind. Their method, of course, is an alliance with anized labor. Just as the magnates of the industrial age coalesced with old landed aristocracy as the price of power, so the new aristocracy the clerks is ready to make terms with the aristocracy of organized or, to divide the spoils and rule alone—at the expense of the consumer. nce the passion for monopolies which fills the heart of every bureaucrat.

This is not even an unconscious process. It is a deliberate political gram. The English Labour Party, though calling themselves socialists, not preparing the nationalization of the means of production, dis- ution, and exchange. Their program is the nationalization of the ic industries: railways, shipping, coal, iron and steel, cotton, and pos- y agriculture. These industries are no longer basic in the sense that prosperity of the country depends on them more than on other indus- s and activities. Some of them are actually dying industries. They are, vever, industries which employ the greatest aggregates of organized or and the evident intention of the Labour Party is to place these indus- s on the taxpayer's back, offering the shareholders a minimum, but ure, return on their capital, and to those employed in them a high, sub- zed, and guaranteed standard of life. It is quite impossible to say how ny such subsidized and privileged industries an industrial nation like at Britain could afford. It is therefore impossible to say how long h a system could endure. There would inevitably be a constant pressure n the unsubsidized industries, and also from many of the unsecured ncial interests, to bring themselves within the magic circle of easy ney. The solution of the riddle can only be guessed. It is possible that h a system would only prove a very temporary half-way house to ialism on the Russian plan, which, after all, is nothing more than social- logically applied. It is at least as probable that it would provoke that racteristic reaction of the unorganized individuals and interests (who, n today, constitute a majority in every state) which is known as fascism.

Fascism, however, is not a creed, but an act of revolt. It answers n problems.

The recent election in England may seem, at first sight, to prove tha neither socialism nor fascism is a very powerful political force in tha country. But the facts are the other way. The Labour vote of 8,500,00 was the highest in history; and on a poll of 21,500,000 the Governmer majority in votes was well under 2,000,000. The next four years ma either see a steady progress under the National Government towar socialization, or, if it adopts a negative program, the next election ma give the socialists an absolute majority. The alternative possibility is tha we may well see the beginnings of a move towards a society based on wider distribution of real property. In France and Spain, the strengt of agriculture will long resist socialization, and the return to economi self-sufficiency must in its turn strengthen the already formidable politica predominance of the country over the town. That is the hope, too, fo England, where agricultural interests still exert a political influence dispro portionate to their present economic importance. In the fascist states th issue is as undecided as it is in England, but the tendency is perhaps mor strongly towards an active redistribution of property, accompanied b vigorous insistence on efficient management. The big land reclamation an settlement schemes in Italy, and the even more interesting industrial lan settlement schemes in East Prussia show this tendency at work. On the on hand, the active development of native resources in the most scientifi manner; on the other, a determination to preserve the realities of economi independence.

It is no part of my task here to prophesy the ultimate result. I have been concerned only to tell the story as far as it has gone. Finance capital ism is dead. The movement towards economic self-sufficiency will not in the present age, or in the future (unless new conditions supervene), be peacefully arrested. The League doctrines of self-determination and non intervention challenge by their implications the only possible alternative to the principle of self-sufficiency: that alternative is an internationally controlled European society planned to the artificial and unnatural end of preserving the old volume of trade by arresting the process of indus trialization and removing tariff barriers. As things are, first the War, and

en the Peace and the League have immeasurably speeded up the march self-sufficiency, and left the world face to face with grave problems of adjustment. These problems in their colonial aspect concern immediately pan and Italy, and will inevitably arise in connection with Germany and land from the mere pressure of population. Economic readjustment will forced on England, and this in turn will have widespread repercussions, rticularly in South America. Any attempt to delay, still more to prevent, necessary measures of readjustment, either through the machinery of League or by financial or political pressure, whether centered in London, ris, Washington, or New York, will lead inevitably to war. The problem st be faced realistically—possibly even with a little cynicism.

The repercussions of self-sufficiency on the historical, social, and itical forces of European society are already at least equally marked. the one hand, the economic need for intensive specialization, for mass duction and standardization, have gone with the collapse of finance italism: the necessary subordination of politics to economics, of social l-being to the needs of bare existence, is a thing of the past. On the er hand, the powerful political and financial interests behind the exist- structure of monopolistic capitalist mass-productive industry will not render their privileged position in the economic structure of Western rope without a struggle, and will make ready terms with socialism in hange for subsidies and guarantees. Either the free and independent ducers and the agricultural interests will coalesce and secure themselves inst the march of collectivism by ordinary political means, or they will forced, in order to escape from the burden of carrying the subsidized controlled privileged industries on their backs, into an act of revolt. no case will the privileged industries and interests remain privileged. If y win the day and survive the revolt, the march towards the completely ialized state will continue. It can no more be arrested at the point where convenient to organized labor and the banking interests, than the pro- s of world industrialization could have been arrested at the point where it led English, French, and American financiers. In other words, the Euro- n scene shows clearly that the collapse of finance capitalism necessi- s as clear and drastic changes in the social and economic structure of different nations as it does in their international relations and respon-

sibilities. The compromise of state capitalism has failed with the need fi drastic readjustment directed towards self-sufficiency. It demands for i working a degree of inequality between man and man which is quite incon patible with even a partial assumption by the state of responsibility fi the economics of industry. State action or planning on a large scale w for a long time continue to be necessary, and such action, if it is to produ anything but chaos, must take as its goal either the preservation of pro erty widely distributed under proper safeguard, or the total abolition property. The one fatal development would be the growth among the o industrial powers of a competitive economic nationalism based on t subsidization of their own exporting and mass-productive industries an the denial to the more recently industrialized states of a chance of ne markets or new colonies.

Such a decision would mean a world war, but it could not be take without at least the tacit consent of the United States. Many in Europ regard that certain fact as their one insurance against such a futile cata trophe. Perhaps there may be some in the United States who, for the part, regard the clear warning which Europe has given of the inheren instability of bureaucratic state capitalism and of the political danger inseparable from any attempt to preserve it by subsidies, as an insuranc against any attempt to develop the system in their own country. Europe too, should provide another lesson, which is that the old and tried forms o government are not necessarily the most easily adapted to the needs of a age of transition. The governments of Fascist Italy and of National-Socia ist Germany have shown, however ruthless their methods, a greater appre ciation of the realities of the modern problem. Democracy will only b saved if it can learn, if necessary from its enemies, that the only possibl foundation of liberty is property, and that a nation or a continent which attempts to keep one part of its people in economic subjection to the othe part will, in denying liberty, provoke war. Self-sufficiency cannot be limite in its application to sovereign states. It is necessary in some measure t the health and dignity of every community.

GOODBYE TO CAP'M JOHN

S. S. Field

My uncle, Cap'm John Bell, is a big man with steady eyes. He used to look rather silly in his golfing pants, those transparent linen tights that I dare to remember him in some fifteen years ago—a man who had built up a rugged deep-water towing and dredging business when New Orleans was still a mud flat.

But he has given up the game of golf now. Now he is just rounding that big turn in the weary river, as he says, where the rest is an easy, wide swing down to salt water and the open sea. And so he sits a great deal of the time in the towing office now, looking out over the river, watching the querulous gulls with his distant eyes: the nearly deserted river since the city administration raised the docking fees to the level of the bonded indebtedness. Usually he is fiddling with something, a pencil or his watch chain, looking out at the mile of bending yellow river. He spends a lot of his time that way.

But fifteen or twenty years ago he had a number of the fancy kind of friends, among whom he was compelled to move through a period of uncomfortable collars with the silent and half-smiling suspicion of a roughshod stranger caught in the middle of a minuet.

Because fifteen or twenty years ago he had made enough money, the step into society was down, not up: a man who had generations of tugboats and train ferries and deep-sea barges named for him and for the women of his family, and with generations of river niggers in turn named for the

boats. And since it is the women in a man's family who make a business of society, the godmothers of the barges managed it irrespective of his trade and thanks to its profit.

He was saddled first with one of our city's carnival organizations, one of the better ones, and so I remember him also as a prince: a massive man in button shoes, with the edge of his long underwear showing beneath the elastic of his knee breeches. It was his only carnival appearance; I was there with my mother to watch the night parade from his balcony when he dressed for that ball. "Filthy business," he said, glancing down at me once, tentative, alert; standing in massive and outlandish gravity, looking at himself. I was eleven. He always addressed me as one man to another, as a philosopher, say, to a scientific man, perhaps out of respect for my mother's brave hope or perhaps as his own subtle suggestion that I might continue my growing along masculine lines. "Not many of them seem to on your side of the family, Martha," he used to tell my mother. But standing there that night inspecting his silken bulk, we both were a little anxious. "Yes," he said.

"Yes, sir," I said.

"It's not the way I look. I look all right. But it's why I look this way." And he stared past himself in the big gold mirror. "I never wanted to get this high," he said.

He took up golf as the natural and most hardy adjunct to the launching of his family in society.

Cap'm John was in society altogether for about four years. He could have stayed there had he wished. He could have steered a carnival float down Canal Street year after year with all the papal altitude of a ferry boat captain and with about as much variety, but he got out. He gave his golf sticks to a negro named Hopper Bell and he went back to sit in the towing office or in the wheel house of a sea-going tug. "Where I belong," he said. He returned to his river and to himself on the day of his third golf tournament; on the day that Frohman died. Frohman was a negro, too.

It is not surprising that at fifty-five my uncle, Cap'm John, excelled at golf. Twenty years ago in New Orleans the game was played by a handful of elderly or ailing gentlemen who would attack the ground with the

iberation and the awkwardness and somewhat the swagger of small
ys learning to chop wood—and my uncle was a larger man than most.
is less surprising that he should have excelled at the game than that he
uld have played it at all. Because he saw beyond that game; as though
were a bend in the river (and so it was), just as he saw beyond most
ngs—himself, for instance. He used to confide in me in those days, and
n then I must have known that he was seeing far beyond my thin legs
l my eleven years, placing his confidences upon some later pinnacle to
ich I might one day climb or not climb. It made me walk straighter, with
ler and more alert eyes. Like the thing he said one day about golf: "It
o game for you, you know," he said. "You look mighty neat today."

"No, sir," I said. "Why? Yes, sir, my stockings . . ."

"You should have one stocking coming down," he said. "With both
r stockings up you'll be a poet. Because—" he said. "Golf is a circular
h. It is for old men who have nowhere to go. Going, you know; that is
thing."

"Yes, sir," I said, secretly loosening one of my pants buckles.

"But few men think of going," he said, fiddling with the golf ball and
king off . . . I remember how he tried to tell me then about golf: about
the things a man does to excess are the measure of his soul, and how
ng was better than golf; how going holds something finer than the safe
e positiveness of the four walls of circumstance, something better than
smallness, the immediacy of the shiny metal blades—the mashies and
niblicks whipped through the grass in pursuit of a little white ball, it
a sphere, resolving into an instant exaltation or despair . . . "It is like
moon." He held up the golf ball. "With its little craters. Never play
or pool . . . or bridge," he said, "and your chances will be better. Fore."

"Yes, sir," I said. He won his second golf tournament that summer.

I was in the towing office early on the day that Frohman died. I had
n promised a ride on the new *Martha R. Bell* and so both of my stock-
were down by the time I had run from the street car to the docks and
he stairs. I found Cap'm John standing at the window watching the
r. "Good morning, Cap'm," I said. I sat on the high stool, hoping he
ld notice my stockings.

"Good morning," he said. He said it slowly. "I'm afraid we can't g today." My heart stopped for a sickening moment. "One of my nigger has been hurt," he said. "Another one. I guess we'll have to see what w can do."

"Yes, sir," I said. "What happened to him?"

"He was shot."

I whistled. "Where was he shot? How did he get shot? Who shot him Cap'm John? What . . ."

"I don't know," Cap'm John said. We were already descending the stairs without my noticing it.

"Will he die?" I said.

"I don't know," Cap'm John said.

"When was he shot? Today, was he? This morning?" I had to run to keep up. We were going fast and both of my stockings were well down "Who was it, Cap'm John? Which one of them was it?"

"Frohman," Cap'm John said. "My caddy." That was when I remembered that the summer before, it had been Snag.

Snag was a crippled negro who had caddied for my uncle when he won his first golf tournament. Cap'm John had been fond of Snag. He was fond of all negroes, and I remember how pleased both he and Snag would be over any golf shot the two of them contrived to make; it was as though Snag carrying the golf bag and handing the stick was half of the shot without which teeing the ball and driving it could not have had any meaning whatever, and Snag would scramble along behind Cap'm John, fast, with all the keys of a grand piano displayed in his face, saying "Wham, Cap'm Jawn suh! Yes, suh! Us set thatun down like a fo' bits bet. Wham!" all the way to the next shot.

But Snag used to swim in the river. He believed it would help his undeveloped leg. He had a mongrel dog and the two of them would swim on warm mornings up at a great sweeping bend of levee and wilderness beyond the golf course. Sometimes when the current was gone the two of them would swim across. It was on an empty Sunday morning that Snag was killed. He hadn't seen the oil tanker when she came around the bend. They were out in the middle, then, just two black specks on the yellow vastness. Then the long blast came like a mighty trumpet. They said that the

nigger must have misjudged their swing. They were already well on the turn when they saw him and they said that they eased the wheel to straighten out and pass the nigger on starboard. They said that he must have just put it to a guess and he guessed wrong because they said that he had two-thirds of the river to swim in but that he turned back and so they put the wheel hard to starboard and then he turned back again—the two of them, the nigger and the dog, swimming back and forth each time in a shorter arc until they could see his face stretched like laughter in the sunshine with all the white teeth, or like a grimace of joyous surprise, recognition, and with men even running forward, waving from the swinging cliff (she was high, empty) and the long trumpet blast right up to the moment he was struck and they wasted the life preserver. He was struck by the great bulging side, nearly amidship, as the wall of steel swung gate-like and fast with the wheel hard over. They saw only the hand and the vanishing gleam of teeth and then nothing. And now it was Frohman.

It was my first visit to a charity hospital. It must have been Cap'm John's first visit, too, for the following year he gave the negroes a hospital of their own. "It's like the inside of a swill pot," Cap'm John said as we waited in the grimy hallway, and he began to curse them for a lot of unclean butchers. "I don't know that your mother would approve of this, and I can't say that I'd blame her. But then you may remember it; come along, then, here we go."

I remember it. Frohman had the face, the nostrils, the eyes, the color of that central figure in most stained glass windows, after the sun has gone down. He was in a ward with unwashed floor and walls among a dozen other negroes in beds, men and women whose dumb eyes followed us in hope. The white rolling irises of Frohman's eyes spoke first when he saw Cap'm John. Then his voice came, very thin now, with a kind of gasping of the light servility and the swagger and the old meaningless effusion. "Yas suh, Cap'm Jawn, suh. Young Cap'm, suh. I jes had to lef you know . . . now I'm is, Cap'm Jawn. Account of how me and you was gwi wham that ball in that turment tomorrow . . . Account of how me and you was gwi . . ."

I remember the long black hand moving on the sheet. Then the doctor came. He seemed too young and thin to be a good doctor. He was explaining the case and drawing with a scalpel on the chart. His voice seemed insolent

with gaiety, so near the lean gourd head and eyes of Frohman. I dared to look once more at those eyes that saw only Cap'm John. "Altogether negligible prospects," the doctor was saying and drawing. "A split bullet. You are familiar with the stem and blossom of the tube lily? The split bullet describes that lovely plant form within the intestines; here you have the stem and here you have the blossom forming—" I could feel Cap'm John looking inside of the man and waiting too long. When he spoke his voice was quiet and tightening like a warping hawser.

"What are you?" he said. "The gardener? Get this boy moved into a private room. Get out of here and get me a doctor. Get me the head surgeon, not a florist!" And the doctor had somehow vanished.

And so we stood there. It was as though Frohman and Cap'm John and I were each looking at a point somewhere within Frohman, and then it was as though the point, as we watched it, had quietly gone somewhere beyond Frohman and we watched it go, Frohman watching it too, and then our eyes stopped, Frohman's did, and Cap'm John's went on still further beyond that point which Frohman had recognized as the logical place to stop. Because the pain seemed to go out of Frohman's eyes. "Jes account of that turment tomorrow, Cap'm Jawn," he said. The shape of his head made me want to cry. "Account of how me and you was gwi wham that ball tomorrow . . ." Cap'm John's eyes looked now at the new point, the Tomorrow of Frohman's voice, suspended somewhere in the sterile half-light above the bed where the thin profusion, the apologia in little thin strutful vowels, issued forth once more; and then it was as though the other point and this one had become the same and I saw that the corners of Cap'm John's mouth were down and the thin voice was saying, "You got to git mo' right wris' in there, Cap'm, and mind you dont lif' yo haid—" Then the pale irises rolled back. The pain on his face was like glory. "I ain't be cahyin yo' bag but us'll be pullin' for you, Cap'm Jawn. Me and ole Snag." He looked again, his teeth showing again. "But jes account of that turment, Cap'm Jawn . . . I be thinking if all thing don't go right . . . some kind of lil sen'-over, Cap'm, when you wins that turment . . . Like old Snag used to say, Wham, Cap'm Jawn suh—" Then I was watching the eyes again. "Wham, Cap'm Jawn. Wham, Cap'm. Wham, Ca— . . . wham." Then he was still looking, eagerly now, as though he were watching the

flight of a ball, high and far; it too a sphere resolving into an instant exaltation or despair—but he no longer seemed to see. That is the way I remember it.

I cried on the way out. Cap'm John put his arm around me and patted my shoulder. "That," Cap'm John said, "was death. Come along, now."

And so that's how it came to be Hopper Bell's time. It was as if besides Cap'm John's sticks and his linen knickers (through which could be seen with infallible regularity, like an eccentricity in dress, the outline and even the patented seat arrangement of my uncle's underdrawers—until even his underdrawers became an incontrovertible public fact, an incident to recognition, along with his honesty, his button shoes, his size, and his job)—as if besides the sticks and the transparent tights, Cap'm John owned also a private stable of three negroes concomitant to his golf and graded in seniority: Snag, Frohman, Hopper Bell. And now it was Hopper Bell.

And I must say this to Hopper Bell's ghost—wherever it is: that there would have been no cheap tin trophy won by our stable that day had Cap'm John known, as I knew, about the monstrous superstition among those negroes. Because maybe one of them helped to cart the furrowed despair of Frohman to the hospital (they took him there in an ice wagon) and maybe Frohman (he was delirious) had had a vision; I don't know. At any rate, in the lush harangue and babble of the caddy house that day, on the heels of Frohman's death, they knew that there would be three. And now it was Hopper Bell.

He was a tall, thin-headed negro, very black and quiet. He was beautiful, his face and his eyes and the angle of his long head which he carried to one side in a gentle manner and on the top of which he wore (with the serious placidity of a black young saint) a soiled, red bell-hop's cap with brass buttons.

But I will always remember Hopper Bell's face on that day that he caddied for my uncle's last golf tournament—the wild, agonized, up-gazing face with the mute velvet eyes. Perhaps it was most beautiful then; it has been stamped upon my mind in pain for such a long time. Because I was there that day of the third caddy and the third tournament. I was there and I knew and I didn't stop them. Following along in the determined little

coterie of my uncle and negroes and friends all the way around the circular path, with my stockings down and panic in my mind, I knew and I didn't stop the tournament. I didn't say, "Cap'm John, excuse me, sir, but I must talk with you alone." I didn't say, "Cap'm John, sir, please. Do with me what you will. Kill me, hate me, do anything to me, but please don't finish this tournament." And maybe that is why his face has been stamped upon my mind in pain for so long. Hopper Bell's face.

Because I was there that day, because I had to be there that day. I had to be with Cap'm John. Not on account of the tournament. On account of Frohman's death. It had bound me somehow to my uncle and I knew that I had to be with him, close to him that day and the next and the next until time and experience might slowly unite us again as child and man, restore our vast small world of interdependence which the death of a negro had divided as with a wall of silence. Because his eyes were stronger than mine, Cap'm John's: seeing far out beyond that point where Frohman's eyes had stopped, and not coming back. And I had to have those eyes back, close to me again, to center now and then their warmth, their scrutiny, their puzzlement upon mine, and I wanted to hear once more the voice going beyond me—scouting out into the world of his experience and then returning to say, "Well what do you think of this, now," or "What do you think of that." And then we would be once more like two people necessary to each other . . . It has taken me so long to understand my first death, the death of Frohman. And now I wish that we were back the way we were, Cap'm John and I; but we never can be. Too much has died; the wall of silence has gone too high.

So I was there that day. I was alone in the sun outside of the caddy house when I learned; when I heard their voices. I was unraveling the core of a golf ball and thinking about Frohman and wishing that my father too were alive to help me face fear and sadness and a world full of harder boys who were not a prey to their stockings, whose stockings had not become a conscious obsession of fear, a measure of courage or cowardice, a challenge or an admission. But mostly I was just miserable and unraveling rubber when I heard their voices, rich, guttural, quarrelsome, with the sourceless flow and uncontrol of bubbling mush. When I heard the first

ce say, "Shure. Cahy that bag and sign your dead warran'! That boy a l to cahy that bag, man, shure."

And the second voice: "Better be him dan me. Cause de Cap'm jes chally figure to win dis turment one-up. Jes like it was writ down in de ok, cause ain't de Cap'm dooze three-up and two to play in de first tur- nt—"

"And de tanker got ole Snag. Wham!"

"And ain't de Cap'm dooze two-up and one to play in de second ment—"

"And de split bullet found ole Frohman. Wham!"

And then a third and a fourth voice together with the other two in t, outrageous babbling, in ceaseless turmoil and harangue with the noise it irritable chickens make, the total, the absolute, the utter conviction of nd, "Ole hawd-haided boy. Shure, man, de Cap'm gwi be lookin down ster Ginny thoat on number eighteen green and then where is you at?"

"An didn' ole Frohman has that dream about passin wid de dices ee times, and didn' de dream book say mind out where you walks and down on de number three?"

"Cap'm gi'ing ole Frohman a fawty-dollar sen'-over. Boy, how come u don't gawn home and save de Cap'm money—" And then Cap'm John's ce calling, and the swift silence within the caddy house.

"Hopper? Where's my boy? Come on here, son, and bring my bag."

He came out slowly, with the red bell-hop's cap on his saint-like head, wn-looking, miserable, as if he were sick, stopping once to kick some- ng with his long thin foot. Then he said quietly, "Yas suh, Cap'm. Here is." Inside the caddy house the dark eyes with the pale china irises tched him go, like the eyes of animals in a cave.

And so there was a gallery of negroes too—a forlorn, downcast, stringy , following at a safe distance, not talking.

I don't remember much about that game. We must have made a strange ocession forging along with the deliberation of priests and acolytes, with pper Bell looking like a walking advertisement for a Georgia Springs tel, and the trailing negroes and big Cap'm John and Mr. Guernsey and other negro.

I remember chasing along behind, running often and bumping int them as if I were blind, and being spoken to, and then I remember Hoppe Bell's thin, agonized, up-gazing face beneath the red monkey cap watch ing the flight of the ball with rushing eyes and then I was praying tha Cap'm John would lose and it was the next to the last hole and then I though that I would have to scream for them to stop and with my mouth alread shaped for words and my eyes on the crucifixion of Hopper Bell's face an then Mr. Guernsey had teed his ball and was waggling his club and couldn't scream.

The rest isn't easy to tell, being a composite within an instant of al the terror, the recrimination, the shame that seems to have been childhood the instant when Cap'm John struck the ball with all the heave of a spike driver; the click that could have been the snapping of a camera within my mind; the slow instant of exaltation, of despair, when Hopper Bell squeezed his eyes beneath his long pale fingers and the eyes of the other negroes rose and held and sank even as they began to walk away, spent, and when Mr. Guernsey turned to shake hands with Cap'm John (Mr. Guernsey had one ball out of bounds) and Cap'm John turned and Hopper Bell still held his eyes in his Christ-like hand.

"What's the matter with my boy?" Cap'm John said. It was late, nearly dark. There were only the five of us at the tee. "What's the matter with my boy? What's the matter with you, son? Won't somebody tell me what's the matter with my darky?"

And then Hopper's voice, sudden, thin, gentle: "Nawsuh, Cap'm suh. Ain't nothin. Wham, Cap'm Jawn suh. Wham, Cap'm!" on an ascending wire of sound.

He thought that I was congratulating him, at first. At first he just thought that I had gone out of control, or maybe he thought that I was trying to fly. It was just that I had to say it then and so maybe I did run headlong into him, leap into him. He caught me rather handily. I remember his embarrassment and the touch of foolish mirth as if some ladies' lingerie had blown into his face and then I was telling him and choking and we were sitting on the green mound and the others had walked away, leaving us alone in the mist that had begun to rise with evening. He listened—quiet, kind, massive.

"Fear, you know," he said. "It is a very real thing . . . Only the truly ung in the world have the wisdom to be afraid. Someday you will under- nd this; that most people on earth are born old and heedless and afraid." (This was in 1914.) "I am glad you told me," he said finally. care less for the game of golf than I do for my caddy's face. Come along, w, and we'll straighten him out."

Frohman's funeral was on the following day and my uncle, Cap'm hn Bell, gave him that.

It was fine. Frohman would have been mighty proud to see himself ling in the polished black wagon behind the negro with the cotton gloves d the opera hat. And to have seen the negroes. There must have been undred of them who came, appeared, as if out of nowhere, with the finite pomp of people invited to a party, and dressed for the occasion. d then the band! Cap'm John gave him that, too.

So things were a little better that day. Frohman lived out near the w Basin Canal and the railroad tracks, and just the right distance from e sad little picket field of wood and concrete markers that was to be stopping-off place until some later city ordinance should shunt his dark st elsewhere in the great anonymity—so we walked; we were a parade. ings were better.

First there was the square black wagon with the screened windows and e carved circus scrollwork, then the six piece band, then Cap'm John d I, and then the negroes. I remember looking back as we turned the rner with the band taking the high notes of "Tiger Rag," their dazzling rinets and trombones aimed at the sky, shimmering, and I could see all e curled palms swinging in unison with a cake-walk swagger, and the or fifteen negroes in bandmasters' uniforms (a kind of outlandish negro provisation from the outlandish Caucasian habits of Shriners, Elks, sons, and the Royal Order of St. James, only made of cheap materials; y were an organization) with the black velvet banner and the white ton gloves. I remember the identical curl of each pair of the white ton gloves—and the way they lifted their feet: high and slithering as if ssing imaginary eggs. It was fine. We must have been grand as we

rounded the turn skirting the New Basin Canal on Frohman's march t glory. Even Cap'm John swaggered a little.

"This is better," he said. "I should have my prince suit here. It i remarkable what Providence directs their feet while they aim those horn at heaven. Frohman must be enjoying this," and we sashayed around thi turn onto the dry mud street to glory . . .

And so we buried Frohman. Cap'm John was splendid.

And that afternoon too we had our first ride on the new *Martha H Bell.* She is still in service, small and tough and jovial, with a decide swagger of her own on the turns. Somehow I know that she will live jus about as long as Cap'm John, and not much longer. I see her now and then And when we marched out of Frohman's funeral that day, and onto he steep, new deck, he seemed to have stepped out of public life and back int the privacy of himself. The only regret I have ever heard him expres concerning his brief sojourn among the gentle was over the winning o his third golf tournament.

Hopper Bell, by the way, is dead.

"Experience, you know. That is the thing. Experience is pain and it is out of pain that we grow." I remember he said that, that evening on the way back, hurrying around the great bend in the river, butting our way proudly in the amber afterglow. The gulls were clamoring and moiling over a drifting meal. And then I remember him standing against the even-i ing, looming a little bit in the wheelhouse beside me, silent, watching the river. I remember him that way. When I left him that night I thanked him.

THE OLD ORDER

Katherine Anne Porter

.N THEIR later years, the Grandmother and old Nannie used to sit gether for some hours every day over their sewing. They shared a ıssion for cutting scraps of the family finery, hoarded for fifty years, to strips and triangles, and fitting them together again in a carefully sordered patchwork, outlining each bit of velvet or satin or taffeta with a nning briar stitch in clear lemon-colored silk floss. They had contrived ough bed and couch covers, table spreads, dressing table scarfs, to have rnished forth several households. Each piece as it was finished was lined th yellow silk, folded, and laid away in a chest, never again to see the ght of day. The Grandmother was the great-grand-daughter of Kentucky's ost famous pioneer: he had, while he was surveying Kentucky, hewed out ther competently a rolling pin for his wife. This rolling pin was the randmother's irreplaceable treasure. She covered it with an extraordi-rily complicated bit of patchwork, added golden tassels to the handles, d hung it in a conspicuous place in her room. She was the daughter of notably heroic captain in the War of 1812. She had his razors in a shagreen se and a particularly severe-looking daguerreotype taken in his old age, th his chin in a tall stock and his black satin waistcoat smoothed over still-handsome military chest. So she fitted a patchwork case over the agreen and made a sort of envelope of cut velvet and violet satin, held gether with briar stitching, to contain the portrait. The rest of her handi-ork she put away, to the relief of her grandchildren, who had arrived at

the awkward age when Grandmother's quaint old-fashioned ways caused them acute discomfort.

In the summer the women sat under the mingled trees of the side garden, which commanded a view of the east wing, the front and back porches, a good part of the front garden and a corner of the small fig grove. Their choice of this location was a part of their domestic strategy. Very little escaped them: a glance now and then would serve to keep them fairly well informed as to what was going on in the whole place. It is true they had not seen Miranda the day she pulled up the whole mint bed to give to a pleasant strange young woman who stopped and asked her for a sprig of fresh mint. They had never found out who stole the giant pomegranates growing too near the fence: they had not been in time to stop Paul from setting himself on fire while experimenting with a miniature blowtorch, but they had been on the scene to extinguish him with rugs, to pour oil on him, and lecture him. They never saw Maria climbing trees, a mania she had to indulge or pine away, for she chose tall ones on the opposite side of the house. But such casualties were so minor a part of the perpetual round of events that they did not feel defeated nor that their strategy was a failure. Summer, in many ways so desirable a season, had its drawbacks. The children were everywhere at once and the negroes loved lying under the hackberry grove back of the barns playing seven-up, and eating watermelons. The summer house was in a small town a few miles from the farm, a compromise between the rigorously ordered house in the city and the sprawling old farm house which Grandmother had built with such pride and pains. It had, she often said, none of the advantages of either country or city, and all the discomforts of both. But the children loved it.

During the winters in the city, they sat in Grandmother's room, a large squarish place with a small coal grate. All the sounds of life in the household seemed to converge there, echo, retreat, and return. Grandmother and Aunt Nannie knew the whole complicated code of sounds, could interpret and comment on them by an exchange of glances, a lifted eyebrow, or a tiny pause in their talk.

They talked about the past, really—always about the past. Even the future seemed like something gone and done with when they spoke of it. It did not seem an extension of their past, but a repetition of it. They would

gree that nothing remained of life as they had known it, the world was hanging swiftly, but by the mysterious logic of hope they insisted that ach change was probably the last; or if not, a series of changes might ring them, blessedly, back full-circle to the old ways they had known. Who knows why they loved their past? It had been bitter for them both, ney had questioned the burdensome rule they lived by every day of their ves, but without rebellion and without expecting an answer. This unbroken nread of inquiry in their minds contained no doubt as to the utter rightness nd justice of the basic laws of human existence, founded as they were on od's plan; but they wondered perpetually, with only a hint now and then o each other of the uneasiness of their hearts, how so much suffering and nfusion could have been built up and maintained on such a foundation. he Grandmother's rôle was authority, she knew that; it was her duty to ortion out activities, to urge or restrain where necessary, to teach morals, anners, and religion, to punish and reward her own household according a fixed code. Her own doubts and hesitations she concealed, also, she eminded herself, as a matter of duty. Old Nannie had no ideas at all as to er place in the world. It had been assigned to her before birth, and for her ily rule she had all her life obeyed the authority nearest to her.

So they talked about God, about heaven, about planting a new hedge rose bushes, about the new ways of preserving fruit and vegetables, out eternity and their mutual hope that they might pass it happily gether, and often a scrap of silk under their hands would start them on ng trains of family reminiscences. They were always amused to notice gain how the working of their memories differed in such important ways. annie could recall names to perfection; she could always say what the eather had been like on all important occasions, what certain ladies had orn, how handsome certain gentlemen had been, what there had been to t and drink. Grandmother had masses of dates in her mind, and no emories attached to them: her memories of events seemed detached and bating beyond time. For example, the 26th of August, 1871, had been me sort of red-letter day for her. She had said to herself then that never ould she forget that date; and indeed, she remembered it well, but what d happened to stamp it on her memory she no longer had the faintest tion. Nannie was no help in the matter; she had nothing to do with dates.

She did not know the year of her birth, and would never have had a birthday to celebrate if Grandmother had not, when she was still Miss Sophia Jane, aged ten, opened a calendar at random, closed her eyes, and marked a date unseen with a pen. So it turned out that Nannie's birthday thereafter fell on June 11, and the year, Miss Sophia Jane decided, should be 1827, her own birth-year, making Nannie just three months younger than her mistress. Sophia Jane then made an entry of Nannie's birth-date in the family Bible, inserting it just below her own. "Nanny Gay," she wrote, in stiff careful letters, "(black)," and though there was some uproar when this was discovered, the ink was long since sunk deeply into the paper, and besides no one was really upset enough to have it scratched out. There it remained, one of their pleasantest points of reference.

They talked about religion, and the slack way the world was going nowadays, the decay of behavior, and about the younger children, whom these topics always brought at once to mind. On these subjects they were firm, critical, and unbewildered. They had received educations which furnished them an assured habit of mind about all the important appearances of life, and especially about the rearing of young. They relied with perfect acquiescence on the dogma that children were conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity. Childhood was a long state of instruction and probation for adult life, which was in turn a long, severe, undeviating devotion to duty, the largest part of which consisted in bringing up children. The young were difficult, disobedient, and tireless in wrongdoing, apt to turn unkind and undutiful when they grew up, in spite of all one had done for them, or had tried to do: for small painful doubts rose in them now and again when they looked at their completed works. Nannie couldn't abide her newfangled grandchildren. "Wuthless, shiftless lot, jes plain scum, Miss Sophia Jane; I cain't undahstand it aftah all the raisin' dey had."

The Grandmother defended them, and dispraised her own second generation—heartily, too, for she sincerely found grave faults in them—which Nannie defended in turn. "When they are little, they trample on your feet, and when they grow up they trample on your heart." This was about all there was to say about children in any generation, but the fascination of the theme was endless. They said it thoroughly over and over with thousands of small variations, with always an example among their own

riends or family connections to prove it. They had enough material of their wn. Grandmother had borne eleven children, Nannie thirteen. They oasted of it. Grandmother would say, "I am the mother of eleven chil-ren," in a faintly amazed tone, as if she hardly expected to be believed, or ould even quite believe it herself. But she could still point to nine of them. annie had lost ten of hers. They were all buried in Kentucky. Nannie never oubted or expected anyone else to doubt she had children. Her boast-ng was of another order. "Thirteen of 'em," she would say, in an appalled oice, "Yas, my Lawd and my Redeemah, thirteen!"

The friendship between the two old women had begun in early child-ood, and was based on what seemed even to them almost mythical events. Iiss Sophia Jane, a prissy, spoiled five-year-old, with tight black ringlets hich were curled every day on a stick, with her stiffly pleated lawn panta-ttes and tight bodice, had run to meet her returning father, who had been way buying horses and negroes. Sitting on his arm, clasping him around ie neck, she had watched the wagons filing past on the way to the barns id quarters. On the floor of the first wagon sat two blacks, male and male, holding between them a scrawny, half-naked black child, with a und nubbly head and fixed bright monkey eyes. The baby negro had a ot-belly and her arms were like sticks from wrist to shoulder. She clung ith narrow, withered, black leather fingers to her parents, a hand on each.

"I want the little monkey," said Sophia Jane to her father, nuzzling s cheek and pointing. "I want that one to play with."

Behind each wagon came two horses in lead, but in the second wagon ere was a small shaggy pony with a thatch of mane over his eyes, a long il like a brush, a round, hard barrel of a body. He was standing in straw the knees, braced firmly in a padded stall with a negro holding his bridle. Do you see that?" asked her father. "That's for you. High time you arned to ride."

Sophia Jane almost leaped from his arm for joy. She hardly recognized er pony or her monkey the next day, the one clipped and sleek, the other ean in new blue cotton. For a while she could not decide which she loved ore, Nannie or Fiddler. But Fiddler did not wear well. She outgrew him in year, saw him pass without regret to a small brother, though she refused allow him to be called Fiddler any longer. That name she reserved for

a long series of saddle horses. She had named the first in honor of Fiddler Gay, an old negro who made the music for dances and parties. There was only one Nannie and she outwore Sophia Jane. During all their lives together it was not so much a question of affection between them as a simple matter of being unable to imagine getting on without each other.

Nannie remembered well being on a shallow platform out in front of a great building in a large busy place, the first town she had ever seen. Her father and mother were with her, and there was a thick crowd around them. There were several other small groups of negroes huddled together with white men bustling them about now and then. She had never seen any of these faces before, and she never saw but one of them again. She remembered it must have been summer, because she was not shivering with cold in her cotton shift. For one thing, her bottom was still burning from a spanking some one (it might have been her mother) had given her just before they got on the platform, to remind her to keep still. Her mother and father were field hands, and had never lived in white folks' houses. A tall gentleman with a long narrow face and very high curved nose, wearing a great-collared blue coat and immensely long light-colored trousers (Nannie could close her eyes and see him again, clearly, as he looked that day) stepped up near them suddenly, while a great hubbub rose. The red-faced man standing on a stump beside them shouted and droned, waving his arms and pointing at Nannie's father and mother. Now and then the tall gentleman raised a finger, without looking at the black people on the platform. Suddenly the shouting died down, the tall gentleman walked over and said, to Nannie's father and mother, "Well, Eph! Well, Steeny! Mister Jimmerson comin' to get you in a minute." He poked Nannie in the stomach with a thickly gloved forefinger. "Regular crowbait," he said to the auctioneer. "I should have had lagniappe with this one."

"A pretty worthless article right now, sir, I agree with you," said the auctioneer, "but it'll grow out of it. As for the team, you won't find a better, I swear."

"I've had an eye on 'em for years," said the tall gentleman, and walked away, motioning as he went to a fat man sitting on a wagon tongue, spitting quantities of tobacco juice. The fat man rose and came over to Nannie and her parents.

Nannie had been sold for twenty dollars: a gift, you might say, hardly
d at all. She learned that a really choice slave sometimes cost more than
housand dollars. She lived to hear slaves brag about how much they had
t. She had not known how little she fetched on the block until her own
ther taunted her with it. This was after Nannie had gone to live for good
the big house, and her mother and father were still in the fields. They
ed and worked and died there. A good worming had cured Nannie's pot-
ly, she thrived on plentiful food and a species of kindness not so indul-
nt, maybe, as that given to the puppies; still it more than fulfilled her
ions of good fortune.

The old women often talked about how strangely things come out in
s life. The first owner of Nannie and her parents had gone, Sophia Jane's
her said, hog-wild about Texas. It was a new Land of Promise, in 1832.
had sold out his farm and four slaves in Kentucky to raise the money
take a great twenty-mile stretch of land in southwest Texas. He had
en his wife and two young children and set out, and there had been no
re news of him for many years. When Grandmother arrived in Texas
ty years later, she found him a prosperous ranchman and district judge.
ch later, her youngest son met his granddaughter, fell in love with her,
l married her—all in three months.

The judge, by then eighty-five years old, was uproarious and festive
he wedding. He reeked of corn liquor, swore by God every other breath,
l was rearing to talk about the good old times in Kentucky. The Grand-
ther showed Nannie to him. "Would you recognize her?" "For God
nighty's sake!" bawled the judge, "is that the strip of crowbait I sold
your father for twenty dollars? Twenty dollars seemed like a fortune
me in those days!"

While they were jolting home down the steep rocky road on the long
rney from San Marcos to Austin, Nannie finally spoke out about her
evance. "Look lak a jedge might had better raisin'," she said, gloomily,
ok lak he didn't keer how much he hurt a body's feelins."

The Grandmother, muffled down in the back seat in the corner of the
carryall, in her worn sealskin pelisse, showing coffee-brown at the edges,
eyes closed, her hands wrung together, had been occupied once more

in reconciling herself to losing a son, and, as ever, to a girl and a family of which she could not altogether approve. It was not that there was anything seriously damaging to be said against any of them; only—well, she wondered at her sons' tastes. What had each of them in turn found in the wife he had chosen? The Grandmother had always had in mind the kind of wife each of her sons needed; she had tried to bring about better marriages for them than they had made for themselves. They had merely resented her interference in what they considered strictly their personal affairs. She did not realize that she had spoiled and pampered her youngest son until he was in all probability unfit to be any kind of a husband, much less a good one. And there was something about her new daughter-in-law, a tall, handsome, firm-looking young woman, with a direct way of speaking, walking, talking, that seemed to promise that the spoiled Baby's days of clover were ended. The Grandmother was annoyed deeply at seeing how self-possessed the bride had been, how she had had her way about the wedding arrangements down to the last detail, how she glanced now and then at her new husband with calm, humorous, level eyes, as if she had already got him sized up. She had even suggested at the wedding dinner that her idea of a honeymoon would be to follow the chuck-wagon on the round-up, and help in the cattle-branding on her father's ranch. Of course she may have been joking. But she was altogether too Western, too modern, something like the "new" woman who was beginning to run wild, asking for the vote, leaving her home and going out in the world to earn her own living . . .

The Grandmother's narrow body shuddered to the bone at the thought of women so unsexing themselves; she emerged with a start from the dark reverie of foreboding thoughts which left a bitter taste in her throat. "Never mind, Nannie. The judge just wasn't thinking. He's very fond of his good cheer."

Nannie had slept in a bed and had been playmate and work-fellow with her mistress; they fought on almost equal terms, Sophia Jane defending Nannie fiercely against any discipline but her own. When they were both seventeen years old, Miss Sophia Jane was married off in a very gay wedding. The house was jammed to the roof and everybody present was at least fourth cousin to everybody else. There were forty carriages and more than two hundred horses to look after for two days. When the last wheel

appeared down the lane (a number of the guests lingered on for two eks), the larders and bins were half empty and the place looked as if oop of cavalry had been over it. A few days later Nannie was married off a boy she had known ever since she came to the family, and they were en as a wedding present to Miss Sophia Jane.

Miss Sophia Jane and Nannie had then started their grim and terrible e of procreation, a child every sixteen months or so, with Nannie nursing h, and Sophia Jane, in dreadful discomfort, suppressing her milk with dages and spirits of wine. When they each had produced their fourth d, Nannie almost died of puerperal fever. Sophia Jane nursed both dren. She named the black baby Charlie, and her own child Stephen, she fed them justly turn about, not favoring the white over the black, Nannie felt obliged to do. Her husband was shocked, tried to forbid ; her mother came to see her and reasoned with her. They found very difficult, and quite stubborn. She had already begun to develop implicit character, which was altogether just, humane, proud, and ple. She had many small vanities and weaknesses on the surface: ve of luxury and a tendency to resent criticism. This tendency was ed on her feeling of superiority in judgment and sensibility to almost ry one around her. It made her very hard to manage. She had a quiet of holding her ground which convinced her antagonist that she would ly die, not just threaten to, rather than give way. She had learned now she was badly cheated in giving her children to another woman to feed; resolved never again to be cheated in just that way. She sat nursing child and her foster child, with a sensual warm pleasure she had not amed of, translating her natural physical relief into something holy, l-sent, amends from heaven for what she had suffered in childbed. Yes, for what she missed in the marriage bed, for there also something had ed. She said to Nannie quite calmly, "From now on, you will nurse your dren and I will nurse mine," and it was so. Charles remained her special brite among the negro children. "I understand now," she said to her r sister Keziah, "why the black mammies love their foster children. I mine." So Charlie was brought up in the house as playmate for her Stephen, and exempted from hard work all his life.

Sophia Jane had been wooed at arm's length by a mysterious attractive young man whom she remembered well as rather a snubby litt boy with curls like her own, but shorter, a frilled white blouse and kilt of the Macdonald tartan. He was her second cousin and resembled her s closely they had been mistaken for brother and sister. Their grandparent had been first cousins, and sometimes Sophia Jane saw in him, years aft they were married, all the faults she had most abhorred in her elder brother lack of aim, failure to act at crises, a philosophic detachment from practica affairs, a tendency to set projects on foot and then leave them to perish or to be finished by someone else; and a profound conviction that ever one around him should be happy to wait upon him hand and foot. She ha fought these fatal tendencies in her brother, within the bounds of wifel prudence she fought them in her husband, she was long after to fight them again in two of her sons and in several of her grandchildren. She gained no victory in any case, the selfish, careless, unloving creatures lived and ended as they had begun. But the Grandmother developed a character truly portentous under the discipline of trying to change the characters of others . . . Her husband shared with her the family sharpness of eye. He disliked and feared her deadly wilfulness, her certainty that her ways were not only right but beyond criticism, that her feelings were important, even in the lightest matter, and must not be tampered with or treated casually. He had disappeared at the critical moment when they were growing up, had gone to college and then for travel; she forgot him for a long time, and when she saw him again forgot him as he had been once for all. She was gay and sweet and decorous, full of vanity and incredibly exalted day-dreams which threatened now and again to cast her over the edge of some mysterious forbidden frenzy. She dreamed recurrently that she had lost her virginity (her virtue, she called it), her sole claim to regard, considera-tion, even to existence, and after frightful moral suffering which masked altogether her physical experience she would wake in a cold sweat, dis-ordered and terrified. She had heard that her cousin Stephen was a little "wild," but that was to be expected. He was leading, no doubt, a dashing life full of manly indulgences, the sweet dark life of the knowledge of evil which caused her hair to crinkle on her scalp when she thought of it. Ah, the delicious, the free, the wonderful, the mysterious and terrible life of

n! She thought about it a great deal. "Little day-dreamer," her mother father would say to her, surprising her in a brown study, eyes moist, lips iling vaguely over her embroidery or her book, or with hands fallen on r lap, her face turned away to a blank wall. She memorized and saved these moments scraps of high-minded poetry, which she instantly quoted them when they offered her a penny for her thoughts; or she broke into elancholy little song of some kind, a song she knew they liked. She would n to the piano and tinkle the tune out with one hand, saying "I love this t best," leaving no doubt in their minds as to what her own had been upied with. She lived her whole youth so, without once giving herself ay; not until she was in middle age, her husband dead, her property persed, and she found herself with a houseful of children, making a new for them in another place, with all the responsibilities of a man but h none of the privileges, did she finally emerge into something like an nest life: and yet, she was passionately honest. She had never been anyng else.

Sitting under the trees with Nannie, both of them old and their long tle with life almost finished, she said, fingering a scrap of satin, "It was fair that Sister Keziah should have had this ivory brocade for her wedg dress, and I had only dotted swiss . . ."

"Times was harder when you got married, Missy," said Nannie. "Dat de yeah all de crops failed."

"And they failed ever afterward, it seems to me," said Grandmother.

"Seems to me like," said Nannie, "dotted swiss was all the style when got married."

"I never cared for it," said Grandmother.

Nannie, born in slavery, was pleased to think she would not die in it. was wounded not so much by her state of being as by the word describ- it. Emancipation was a sweet word to her. It had not changed her way of ng in a single particular, but she was proud of having been able to say er mistress "I aim to stay wid you as long as you'll have me." Still, ancipation had seemed to set right a wrong that stuck in her heart a thorn. She could not understand why God, Whom she loved, had n fit to be so hard on a whole race because they had got a certain kind

of skin. She talked it over with Miss Sophia Jane. Many times. Miss Soph Jane was always brisk and opinionated about it: "Nonsense! I tell yo God does not know whether a skin is black or white. He sees only soul Don't be getting notions, Nannie—of course, you're going to Heaven."

Nannie showed the rudiments of logic in a mind altogether untutore She wondered, simply and without resentment, whether God, Who had bee so cruel to black people on earth, might not continue His severity in th next world. Miss Sophia Jane took pleasure in reassuring her; as if sh who had been responsible for Nannie, body and soul in this life, migh also be her sponsor before the judgment seat.

Miss Sophia Jane had taken upon herself all the responsibilities o her tangled world, half white, half black, mingling steadily and the con fusion growing ever deeper. There were so many young men about th place, always, younger brothers-in-law, first cousins, second cousins nephews. They came visiting and they stayed, and there was no account ing for them nor any way of controlling their quietly headstrong habits She learned early to keep silent and give no sign of uneasiness, but when ever a child was born in the negro quarters, pink, worm-like, she "held her breath for three days," she told her eldest granddaughter, years later to see whether the newly born would turn black after the proper inter val . . . It was a strain that told on her, and ended by giving her a deeply grained contempt for men. She could not help it, she despised men. She despised them and was ruled by them. Her husband threw away her dowry and her property in wild investments in strange territories: Loui siana, Texas; and without protest she watched him play away her sub stance like a gambler. She felt that she could have managed her affairs profitably. But her natural activities lay elsewhere, it was the business of a man to make all decisions and dispose of all financial matters. Yet when she got the reins in her hands, her sons could persuade her to this and that enterprise or investment; against her will and judgment she accepted their advice, and among them they managed to break up once more the stronghold she had built for the future of her family. They got from her their own start in life, came back for fresh help when they needed it, and were divided against each other. She saw it as her natural duty to pro vide for her household, after her husband had fought stubbornly through

e War, along with every other man of military age in the connection; d been wounded, had lingered helpless, and had died of his wound long ter the great fervor and excitement had faded in hopeless defeat, when be a man wounded and ruined in the War was merely to have proved eself, perhaps, more heroic than wise. Left so, she drew her family gether and set out for Louisiana, where her husband, with her money, d bought a sugar refinery. There was going to be a fortune in sugar, he d; not in raising the raw material, but in manufacturing it. He had nemes in his head for operating cotton gins, flour mills, refineries. Had lived . . . but he did not live, and Sophia Jane had hardly repaired the use she bought and got the orchard planted when she saw that, in her nds, the sugar refinery was going to be a failure.

She sold out at a loss, and went on to Texas, where her husband had ught cheaply, some years before, a large tract of fertile black land in an nost unsettled part of the country. She had with her nine children, the ungest about two, the eldest about seventeen years old; Nannie and her ee sons, Uncle Jimbilly, and two other negroes, all in good health, full hope and greatly desiring to live. Her husband's ghost persisted in her, e was bitterly outraged by his death almost as if he had wilfully deserted r. She mourned for him at first with dry eyes, angrily. Twenty years er, seeing after a long absence the eldest son of her favorite daughter, o had died early, she recognized the very features and look of the sband of her youth, and she wept.

During the terrible second year in Texas, two of her younger sons, rry and Robert, suddenly ran away. They chose good weather for it, mid-May, and they were almost seven miles from home when a neighring farmer saw them, wondered and asked questions; and ended by suading them into his gig, and so brought them back.

Miss Sophia Jane went through the dreary ritual of discipline she ught appropriate to the occasion. She whipped them with her riding ip. Then she made them kneel down with her while she prayed for m, asking God to help them mend their ways and not be undutiful to ir mother; her duty performed, she broke down and wept with her arms und them. They had endured their punishment stoically, because it uld have been disgraceful to cry when a woman hit them, and besides,

she did not hit very hard; they had knelt with her in a shame-faced gloom because religious feeling was a female mystery which embarrassed them but when they saw her tears they burst into loud bellows of repentance. They were only nine and eleven years old. She said in a voice of mourning so despairing it frightened them: "Why did you run away from me? What do you think I brought you here for?" as if they were grown men who could realize how terrible the situation was. All the answer they could make, as they wept too, was that they had wanted to go back to Louisiana to eat sugar cane. They had been thinking about sugar cane all winter . . . Their mother was stunned. She had built a house large enough to shelter them all, of hand-sawed lumber dragged by ox-cart for forty miles, she had got the fields fenced in and the crops planted, she had, she believed, fed and clothed her children; and now she realized they were hungry. These two had worked like men; she felt their growing bones through their thin flesh, and remembered how mercilessly she had driven them, as she had driven herself, as she had driven the negroes and the horses, because there was no choice in the matter. They must labor beyond their strength or perish. Sitting there with her arms around them, she felt her heart break in her breast. She had thought it was a silly phrase. It happened to her. It was not that she was incapable of feeling afterward, for in a way she was more emotional, more quick, but griefs never again lasted with her so long as they had before. This day was the beginning of her spoiling her children and being afraid of them. She said to them after a long dazed silence, when they began to grow restless under her arms: "We'll grow fine ribbon cane here. The soil is perfect for it. We'll have all the sugar we want. But we must be patient."

By the time her children began to marry, she was able to give them each a good strip of land and a little money, she was able to help them buy more land in places they preferred by selling her own, tract by tract, and she saw them all begin well, though not all of them ended so. They went about their own affairs, scattering out and seeming to lose all that sense of family unity so precious to the Grandmother. They bore with her infrequent visits and her advice and her tremendous rightness, and they were impatient of her tenderness. When Harry's wife died—she had never approved of

rry's wife, who was delicate and hopelessly inadequate at housekeeping, l who could not even bear children successfully, since she died when her d was born—the Grandmother took the children and began life again, h almost the same zest, and with more indulgence. She had just got m brought up to the point where she felt she could begin to work the lts out of them—faults inherited, she admitted fairly, from both sides the house—when she died. It happened quite suddenly one afternoon arly October, after a day spent in helping the Mexican gardener of her d daughter-in-law to put the garden to rights. She was on a visit in far stern Texas and enjoying it. The daughter-in-law was exasperated but parently so docile, the Grandmother, who looked upon her as a child, not notice her little moods at all. The son had long ago learned not to ose his mother. She wore him down with patient, just, and reasonable ument. She was careful never to venture to command him in anything. consoled his wife by saying that everything Mother was doing could changed back after she was gone. As this change included moving a y-foot adobe wall, the wife was not much consoled. The Grandmother e into the house quite flushed and exhilarated, saying how well she in the bracing mountain air—and dropped dead over the doorsill.

LET NOTHING YOU DISMAY

Allen McGinnis

THEY SAT, the two of them, in the hotel room—heavy, relaxed, and contemplative. There had been exactly twenty-two minutes of complete silence between them, and in the last fifteen they had been taking obvious pains that their eyes should not meet. Finally, with a scraping of his chair that sounded unnaturally loud in the quietness, the man rose and went into the bathroom. Presently his wife's thin voice with its peculiar nasal twang split the air.

"Arthur, stop that belching!"

A great sigh from the bathroom. "It's that pumpkin pie, sweetheart. I guess I shouldn't of ate it—but hell, you gotta do something excitin' on Christmas Eve."

"Well, what would you think of me if I went strollin' around burping all over the place simply because it's Christmas Eve?"

The man came through the door of the bathroom and threw his broad bulk on the bed. He unbuttoned his vest and the top of his trousers—and groaned.

"It'd tickle the hell outta me to have you do anything out of your usual routine, my little buttercup—seein' as how this is Christmas Eve."

The reply was dipped in vinegar: "Do you have any suggestions?"

"Well, let's see. I'd like to hear *you* burp just once—if your kidneys could stand the back-fire."

"I guess you think you're bein' very funny, Arthur. It's not my fault

're stuck in a God-forsaken hotel room every Christmas. I've tried to you—"

The man cut her short with a groan, and slapped the bed with the back his hand. "For God's sake, Annie, let's don't get into a row tonight. It 't your fault. It ain't my fault. It ain't nobody's fault! We're just—*e!* We might as well get a few laughs out of it—if we can."

She looked at him intently for a moment, and then leaned over and ted his hand. "I know, Arthur. Guess we both ate too much, though how go on eating this hotel food, year after year, beats me."

His answer was a weary grunt.

Silence settled on the two-and-a-half room. Twenty-two stories below, night traffic hummed and zoomed in alternate crescendos and diminuos that beat with a faint but steady persistence on their ears. When at the man spoke, his voice sounded harsh and strained.

"Have you noticed how quiet Christmas is in these hotels any more?"

"Yeah. Seems nobody goes out."

He grinned. "I can remember when the hotels we stopped at on Christ- had swell dances and a big tree in the lobby on Christmas morning."

"Yeah. Those were the days."

He turned on his side to face her. "There's a dance down on the mezza- tonight, Annie. Wanna go?"

She sucked her lower lip between her teeth and stared at the carpet. , I will if you want to, Arthur. But my corn is givin' me fits tonight. ides, it'll be just a bunch of silly kids."

He flopped over again on his back. "Yeah. And they'd probably be eyed by now, too."

"Yeah. By now."

She began drumming her nails on the arm of her chair. He plucked ntly at the counterpane. Suddenly he threw his legs to the floor and up on the edge of the bed. His back was toward his wife.

"Annie, let's you and me get tight tonight!"

For a moment she did not answer, and then she spoke decisively. "No, hur. I don't think we ought to do any drinkin' tonight. This is *one* istmas that I'd like to go to church in the morning—and you're goin' me."

He got up at that and began walking around the room. "All right, mamma. I'll make a bargain with you. I'll go to church with you in the morning if you'll have a few highballs with me tonight."

"What about your stomach, Arthur? You know what the doctor told you in Wichita about drinking, and you're not really over that spell you had in Springfield yet. And as I always say, you only have one stomach and—"

"To hell with my stomach! If we sit here in this damned room much longer and stare at each other we'll both go nuts."

Once again she suddenly found the pattern of the carpet intensely interesting. "I guess you're right. There's really nothing else to do."

He crossed over to the telephone. "I'll call a boy. He'll probably take the gold out of our teeth, especially since it's Christmas Eve."

A caramel-colored negro appeared at the door in a few minutes. He grinned knowingly, disappeared, and was back with two pint bottles in a paper sack.

"You must've had this in a bathtub down the hall," the man observed. "Now let's have some ginger ale and ice."

When the negro had disappeared for the second time, Arthur began fixing the drinks.

"Let's make the first one a little strong, whaddeya say, mamma?"

"All right, Arthur, you know best."

He handed her a glass and set his own down on the telephone stand beside the bed. Then he propped himself up against the pillows and stretched out his legs comfortably. With a long, luxurious sigh he took the glass from the stand and began sipping his drink. She toyed with hers for a while, and then downed it rapidly, in gulps.

"We make faces at it but we love it," he sighed.

She dried her lips. "I'm goin' to quit drinkin' highballs. It takes so long to get one down."

"You know, buttercup, I—"

"Don't call me 'buttercup'."

"Well, I was thinkin', mamma, why you didn't take up some hobby or sideline to while away the time. Knittin' fancy rugs, for instance."

"Knittin' fancy rugs! My God, what are you gonna spring on me next?"

"Well, other women do it. I see 'em in the pictures."

"Yeah? Well, other women ain't lugged over the countryside six days the week just like so much freight. You want me to knit fancy rugs, huh? ow would you like totin' a rug frame around in the back end of the car? nd what would we do with 'em—if and when I ever finished one? Hang n up on the walls of a different hotel room every night? Wouldn't that sweet!"

He waved his hand feebly. "All right, all right. Don't bring the house ck up! It was just a suggestion. I was only tryin' to help you out, seein' how you're so darned dissatisfied all the time lately."

"What gave you the idea I was dissatisfied?"

"Idea! If it was only an *idea,* I might be able to do somethin' about it. ell, It's gettin' to be more like a religion with you."

Her nostrils quivered suspiciously. "Arthur, I've not let a word of mplaint come out of my mouth in I don't know how many months. It's t fair for you to lay there and try to tell me—"

"I know you ain't said nothin' mamma. It's just that you ain't been okin' well, and you've lost all your old ginger. I don't know what to do out it. It's got me licked."

She did not reply. Finally the man drained his glass and crossed to e dresser.

"You want that straight one now?" he asked.

She nodded.

He handed her the glass and they touched rims.

"Well, here's to a Merry Christmas!"

At those words her glass halted suddenly before her lips. She blinked r eyes quickly two or three times, and then gulped her drink. The man nt over to her and somehow managed to poise his broad thigh on the arm the chair. He patted her shoulder awkwardly with a fat, pudgy hand.

"Don't let it get you, mamma. It'll be better when Wilbur gets here."

At that she raised her eyes to his, and they gleamed wetly in the light. Where do you suppose he is, Arthur? He wired us he'd get in this after- on."

"Well, he might've been called into the office all of a sudden. Besides, wrote me he was tryin' hard to swing that deal in Topeka."

"But he *promised* us, Arthur. Surely he won't let somethin' hold him up this time—not on Christmas Eve."

The man rose from the chair and took the woman's empty glass. He wet his lips speculatively, and after a moment he answered with a good deal of hesitation.

"Well, Annie, I wouldn't bank on it too much if I was you. You know how it is with the kid. He's tryin' to close the year with a good business so he can earn that bonus, and there'll be pretty brisk buyin' right through to the first of the year. He might not be able to tear away and come on down here after all."

She rose a trifle uncertainly from the chair and advanced on her husband threateningly.

"Brisk buyin', my eye! There won't be a single order given from now till the first of the year in anybody's line. If Wilbur don't meet us here for Christmas like he promised, it means he's gone on another binge with that Kansas City bunch, and if he has, I'm goin' up there myself this time."

"Now there, there, mamma! I didn't say Wilbur *wasn't* goin' to be here. I just said he might not get away."

After a moment he was able to lead her back to her chair, where she sat down again with some reluctance. Then he grinned at her disarmingly.

"Y'know what the Governor of North Carolina said to the Governor of South Carolina?" he asked, his eyebrows raised high in an evident glow of anticipation of her reply.

"Yeah," she answered, shaking her head in weary assent. "I know all about what the Governors of the Carolinas said to each other."

The eyebrows dropped suddenly to their normal position.

"Would it kill you to crack a smile?"

"Not if I had somethin' to laugh at."

Once more he poured out two straight drinks of the yellow fluid. "This time we won't drink to nothin'," he announced.

The woman began eyeing her suddenly empty glass with a curious interest. "You know, Arthur, these glasses are a lot like that set we had when we lived in Wichita. Do you remember 'em?"

He dried his lips and drew in a big breath before he answered. "Remember 'em!" he said, and laughed hugely. "How could I forget 'em

nen I've been payin' storage on all that stuff we had at Wichita for nearly teen years now!"

The woman sniffed ominously. "Is that all anything means to you—w much it costs?"

"Well now, what else is there to remember about that set of glasses?"

"Nothing. Nothing at all. They just happened to be your present to e on our fifth anniversary."

"Oh!" he said, and busied himself with his glass.

"I should've known it."

"You should've knowed what?"

"I should've known when you wouldn't come back to St. Louis to arry me at home where the folks had everything all fixed, that my life uld always be like this."

"Good Lord, Annie, are we in for all that again?" He sighed, and sened his collar. "I told you I had to be at that convention in Memphis. ere ain't no way of gettin' out of an annual convention. Besides, I thought d make a nice honeymoon."

"Nice honeymoon! Four days that was one long drunk, if I remember ht. And when you were in the room with me you couldn't talk for the pack on your head. That's the way my honeymoon was. That's the way whole life has been."

"Well, mamma, you know how those conventions are."

She got up from the chair, crossed to the bed, and sat down beside n.

"Arthur, if you'd quit right then when I asked you to, you could be some good business of your own this very minute."

He shook a protesting finger in her face. "Now lissen here, Annie. id quit for you once when I was senior salesman for Delight Flour. Left e of the best jobs on the road. For what? A chicken farm in Joplin. That s *your* idea."

"If you'd stuck with it—"

"Yeah, if I'd stuck with it we'd be dustin' our bottoms in some county or farm. Hell, I told you I didn't know nothin' about chickens."

"You mean that particular kind of chicken!"

"And could I help it if their tail feathers began comin' out at the wrong

time of the year? And wavin' a ten-spot in front of their beaks wouldn't lure one little egg from 'em."

For a moment she seemed to have no answer. Then her now slightly blood-shot eyes brightened. "Well, you've got the chicken farm to thank for Wilbur."

He raised from his pillow. "Whaddaya mean?"

The woman laughed slightly. "Well, if we hadn't stopped for a little while in Joplin, we never would have had time enough to—"

"Annie! I'm ashamed of you."

She dropped her eyes. "It's the truth, though. That one short year in Joplin is the nearest I ever came to havin' a real home. It's all I got to look back to even if the chickens didn't have any feathers."

With a disgusted sigh Arthur plopped back into his pillow.

"Well, it's Wilbur you got to thank that we got away from that chicken farm."

"Meanin' what?"

"Meanin' that after he got here I damned sure had to make a living."

"I suppose you didn't even want to be bothered with Wilbur, did you?"

"Who said I didn't want Wilbur."

"You hinted as much."

"You're nuts."

"Thank you. *Thank you.* I'm glad I do have Wilbur. He's all that keeps my heart from breakin' entirely—"

"Hell, your heart has been breakin' ever since I've known you."

She paused in horrified breathlessness. "Arthur, you keep on talkin' to me like that and I'll—I'll get a divorce!"

"Don't see how," he said, turning on his side and smoothing his pillow with superb nonchalance. "God knows you could never claim desertion with you trailin' me all over the country. And I've always supported you."

"Yeah. You've been a model husband, and I've been kept up in grand style. A candy salesman's wife. Keller's Double Dipped Delights. I might as well be one of your damned boxes of candy, or your order book, or your brief case. You throw me in the car and haul me around just like you do them. I got no home. No friends. Nothin'. And you say I don't have grounds for a divorce."

"Why the hell don't you go ahead and get one then?"

"Don't be so cock-sure, you fat ox. Are you forgettin' that time I rought Wilbur down to Dallas for a surprise visit and caught you with hat blonde hussy who owned that drug-store chain?"

He sat up on the bed as though he operated on springs.

"Now lissen! I've told you before I was sellin' that lady one of the iggest deals I ever put over in my life."

"It was a funny way to close any kind of an order."

"Annie, we're gonna settle this once and for all—"

The metallic clang of the telephone bell stopped him. He jumped from ıe bed and took down the receiver.

"Hello . . . yes . . . yes, I'll hold the line."

She circled the bed and came over to him. "Who is it?"

"Sh-h-h! Kansas City callin'. Guess it's Wilbur."

There was a moment's silence, and he began talking.

"Hello . . . hello . . . Hello, Wilbur . . . Yeah, this is me . . . Oh, we're kay. She's right here beside me . . . What's that? I can't hear you . . . lick your receiver. Seems there's a helluva lot of noise at your end of the ne . . . There's nothin' wrong with me . . . What did you say? I can't hear . . . You won't be able to get away? . . . But Wilbur, your mamma and me as countin' on you . . . What's that? . . . I'm talkin' as loud as I can . . . What the hell's the matter with you?"

She reached for the receiver.

"Give me that phone, Arthur. I'll find out why he's not comin' down."

Her own shrill voice echoed in the room.

"Hello, Wilbur? . . . This is mamma . . . Why ain't you comin' down, weetheart? . . . Well, they gave you the week off last year . . . I can't hear ou . . . Isn't that someone playin' a piano, Wilbur? . . . Wilbur, I can't ear you. Talk louder . . . Wilbur, are you drunk? . . . Sober as a judge! ou don't talk like it . . . Wilbur, don't you run around with that bunch up ıere. You know how much trouble you got into the last time . . . Well, can't ou just come down for a day or so? Your papa and me would sure like to e you . . . Tell 'em to stop playin' that damned piano . . . Wilbur, don't ou do any more drinkin' . . . All right . . . All right . . . Merry Christmas, ourself . . . Goodbye."

She hung up the receiver and stared at the wall before her.

"Well, he just ain't comin' down, that's all. Said something about the boss wantin' him to stay in the office for the rest of the year."

"Yeah. I sorta expected they would."

"Well, that's that."

"Yeah. That's that."

Once more he went over to the dresser. But the woman sank into a chair, her hands folded listlessly in her lap.

When Arthur finished preparing the drinks he glanced at her warily; when he held out the glass his voice was a little too casual, a little too smooth and easy. "Well, we can always have another little snifter. Here, take this. It'll do you good."

She stared at the glass, at the ice which tinkled against the sweating edges, at the cool, golden color of the fluid. Suddenly she sprang from the chair and knocked the glass from the man's hands.

"Drink! Yes, have a drink! It's all you think about, if you ever really think about anything. There Wilbur is, dead drunk up in Kansas City with that scum he runs around with, and you ask me to have a drink!"

He backed against the dresser and set his own drink down.

"Now, mamma, Wilbur might've had a few drinks, but I wouldn't say he was—"

"Wilbur was drunk! I can always tell. And he was at a party."

"Annie, there's no use gettin' yourself worked up over it. It's Christmas Eve. The kid's entitled to a little fun."

She gave a loud, racuous laugh that was tinged with hysteria.

"Yeah. What's the good of doin' anything? You've done the trick. You got him a job as a travelin' salesman, and you can find an excuse for everything he pulls."

"Sure I got him the job."

"Didn't I beg you not to?"

"He'd been out of college four months and hadn't turned his hand. He wanted to go on the road. Why should he sit on his rear end all his life just because he had some crazy letters tacked on behind his name?"

She began crying noisily. "There you are. That's what I've got

put up with the rest of my life. My husband and son—travelin' sales-
en. One just like the other."

With a groan he turned to the dresser and grabbed the drink he had
laced there. He downed it in one gulp.

"Now lissen to me, Annie. You're makin' a fool of yourself, and I'm
ettin' sick of it. Here it is Christmas Eve, and all you can do is rave
round and bawl about me and Wilbur bein' travelin' salesmen."

Slowly, a little unsteadily, she rose to her feet and drew herself up
her full height.

"All right, Arthur. I'll quit trying to do anything with either of you.
ut get this. Either you quit the road and settle down or I'll—I'll divorce
ou!"

He gazed at her intently, and then laughed. "You're drunk!"

She took another step toward him. Great tears began coursing down
er cheeks and splashing on her bosom. "I'm not drunk, Arthur. You've
ot to listen to me. I—I mean what I said. I mean, I'll—I'll actually get
divorce!"

With an effort he focused his gaze on the face that was very close
his own and peered steadily into her streaming eyes.

"Mamma, you're talkin' crazy. You don't know what you're sayin'."

"Oh, can't you get it through your head, Arthur? I can't go on for-
ver like this. Anything would be better. Anything."

She collapsed on the bed. After a moment the man rested his own
eight beside hers, and the springs groaned protestingly. With embar-
assed awkwardness he patted her shaking shoulders.

"My God, Annie! I didn't know it was that bad. You should've told
e."

The shoulders began shaking the more fiercely. He swallowed with
fficulty and resumed his pawing.

"You win, Annie! I'll quit. I'll quit for good. It was gettin' so I couldn't
urn out a decent day's work anyway. I'll send in my resignation the first of
ne year. I guess we can find a way to keep from starvin'."

He got up from the bed and went over to the dresser. There he
oured out a very generous straight drink and held it up to his reflection
n the mirror. "Well, here's goodbye to the good old sellin' game!"

He gulped the drink. Then he set his glass down and began straightening his collar and tie. When that was finished he buttoned his vest, went to the closet, and took down his coat.

The woman had lifted her head and eyed him in growing astonishment. "Where are you goin', Arthur?"

"Out!"

"Out?"

"Yes, *out*! This is Christmas Eve, Annie. I guess you'd plum forgotten about that—but I ain't. If I'm goin' to give up one of the best jobs I've ever had in my life on the first of the year I'm goin' out and celebrate joining the bread line."

"Arthur, you shouldn't go out. It's late."

He wheeled on her in sudden anger. "Holy Snakes in Ireland, woman, ain't I entitled to somethin'? I've done what you asked me to. What other man would give up the only thing he knows how to do to go back to—to a chicken farm? You can sit here in this room and bawl and rave and flood the hotel if you want to—but I'm gonna go out for one last fling—and believe me, it's gonna be a humdinger!"

The door slammed behind him.

Two bell-hops helped him into the room about three o'clock. His face was flushed and one eye was slightly swollen. He groaned aloud with the misery in his stomach.

The woman arose from her seat at the window and dismissed the two grinning negroes with generous tips. Then she dissolved a liberal dose of bicarbonate of soda in warm water and poured it down the inert figure. A few moments later she rushed him to the bathroom and held his head while he lost it between shuddering gasps that shook his body. When that was over she pushed him into bed with his clothes on and covered him up carefully. For a long while she stood looking down at the unconscious form, and after a while murmured aloud into the darkness:

"You poor fool! You poor, miserable fool!"

She undressed and crawled wearily in beside him. At the touch of her body the man flopped over heavily and gathered her into his arms.

"That you, mamma?"

"Yes, honey."

He kissed her neck with long accustomed accuracy.

"Lissen, mamma, I met Tim Donahue down in the lobby when I left. d he told me old man Wellenberger down at Wichita Falls is ready for an der. Gonna start takin' inventory tomorrow and then he can place the der right away for delivery first of the year. And I was thinkin'—mamma, u lissenin'?"

"Yeah."

"Well, I was thinkin': 'Shoot, what's the use of us hangin' around here the lobby tomorrow and twiddlin' our thumbs just cause it's Christmas!' ou see, mamma, if we started down there in the morning and took Christ- as Day to get there I'd beat every candy salesman on the territory to ellenberger's order, and that'd practically put my January quota in the g."

There was no answer.

"Mamma, did ya hear what I was talkin' about?"

"Yes, Arthur."

"Well, whaddaya say?"

"Arthur, are you sure you want to go after Wellenberger's order? n't there somethin' you've forgot?"

"Forgot? Forgot what? Don't talk like you're drunk, mamma."

"All right, Arthur. Anything you say. I'll leave a call for about eight. that all right?"

Once more the man's lips sought her neck. "That's the old girl, mamma. new you'd want me to cop that order. Yeah. Leave a call for eight."

When the woman had hung up the receiver and once more crawled o bed, her husband had turned over on his side. She lay there in the rkness for a few minutes and felt the tears trickle into her ears. Then e spoke softly:

"Arthur, I'd just like to ask one thing. Don't drive very fast tomorrow. e've got all day, and my back's nearly killin' me. Somehow I can't stand ese long drives like I used to. Arthur, do you hear me? Are you asleep?"

But there was no answer. An old familiar sound filled her ears; a sound at all through the long years of her married life had somehow lulled her rrows and heartaches into a quiet numbness. It was the regular rise and l of her husband's snoring.

THE WASHERWOMAN'S DAY

Harriette L. Simpson

IT WAS pneumonia all right, but the lye maybe had something to do with it," Granma said.

Mama shifted Joie to her other breast. "Ollie Rankin ought to have had more sense," she said.

"She didn't know the old fool would take off her shoes and scrub the kitchen barefooted."

"Can I go to the funeral," I said.

"Be quiet," Mama said. "Her shoes were new, and she maybe thought to save them. The poor fool, her legs were swollen purple to her waist, Molly Hardwick said."

"If that Laurie Mae were fit to go into a decent house. They say that baby is exactly like Perce. . ."

Mama looked at me. Granma hushed. "Can I go to the funeral?" I said.

"No," Mama said. "It does make it unhandy. I guess we'll have to get a nigger from Canetown, but I don't like niggers about."

"I always said I'd rather have black trash than white trash any day. . ."

"Did she walk home without her shoes? Susie Chrisman said she did, and there was snow and . . ."

"Hush, Jane," Mama said. "You'll be late to school."

"Spell *vegetation,*" Granma said.

"V-e-g-e-t-a-t-i-o-n," I spelled.

"Wear your overshoes," Mama said.

"Don't go about the funeral," Granma said.

"The Ladies Aid are burying her. Susie Chrisman said her father. . ."

"Don't argue," Mama said, and Granma tapped her cane.

I ran all the way to school. I thought all morning, and at noon I said, Miss Rankin, my little brother Joie was croupy this morning and Mama rgot."

"What?"

"To write a note of excuse for me to go to the funeral. Susie Chrisman going."

"Are you sure your mother wanted you to go?"

"Yes, mam. Clarie Bolin has always done our washing. Mama said should go out of respect for the dead and the Ladies Aid . . . if she was or white trash. I know my spelling."

"You may go at one-thirty," she said.

Susie and I held hands and ran fast down the sidewalk from the nool. We laughed as we ran, for it was good to be out of school and there s a snow promise in the air and Christmas was only two weeks away. the foot of the hill we stopped. "It's not proper to run all the way to a neral," Susie said.

"No," I said. "Did they undertake her?"

"No. My father said it was a waste of good money to undertake poor pple in cold weather. He sold the Ladies Aid the coffin, though."

"Is it true about the roses?"

Susie skipped twice before she remembered and was proper again. es. The Ladies Aid sent all the way to Lexington. Two dozen white es, and it the dead of winter. They cost three dollars . . . and her the sherwoman, Papa said."

Inside the church Mrs. Hyden was singing a solo. Her mouth was very le open, and while we tiptoed to the second row from the back she held word *dew* until it seemed she would not let it go until we sat down. I s embarrassed and in my haste stumbled over Susie. Susie tittered. When were seated, Mrs. Hyden sang on about the dew on the roses and the ce she heard.

Susie nudged me. "Laurie Mae don't look so nice. That coat Mrs. rvey gave her don't fit so good."

I craned my head down the aisle to see. Laurie Mae sat alone in the front row before her mother's coffin. Beside her was a long bundle wrapped in a piece of dirty brown blanket. "Mama said, 'She'll have her nerve to bring that baby.' The Ladies' Aid'll be mad," Susie whispered.

"Mama said the baby looked like Mr. Perce Burton," I said.

"On account of Laurie Mae was a hired girl there last year."

Something jerked my pigtail. I looked around. Mrs. John Crabtree set her lips tight together and looked hard at me. She was president of The Ladies Aid, and Mrs. Ollie Rankin sat with her. I nudged Susie, and we were still. Reverend Lipscomb read The Beatitudes and prayed. While he prayed Susie and I raised our heads and looked at all the people. Susie pinched me. Laurie Mae didn't have her head bowed at her own mother's funeral. "Isn't she awful," Susie whispered.

Then the choir sang "Lord, I'm coming home." Then Reverend Lipscomb preached the funeral. I was glad he made it so short. He talked about what the Bible meant when it said things like the poor and the meek shall inherit the earth. He explained that the poor must be hard working and patient and righteous. He said that righteousness had this day been shown by the ladies of the church in their beautiful putting away of the dead. I thought his words were so wonderful that I would remember them.

He said that man was made to err, and that the dead woman had been no different from the world of men, but he hoped that God in His divine mercy and goodness and infinite wisdom would look down on her and forgive her sins and take her to His bosom. He hoped that the one of the living nearest and dearest to the dead would profit by the affliction that God in His almighty wisdom had seen fit to lay upon her, and change the path of her ways and walk henceforth with uprightness and decency. "He means Laurie Mae," Susie whispered.

"She's not even crying," I said.

He finished and the choir sang. Then Miss Virginia played the piano, and we all walked around and looked at Clarie Bolin and the white roses and Laurie Mae. "Didn't she look ugly," Susie whispered when we were back in our seats.

"She looked mad," I said, and didn't want to whisper any more. It was no longer fun. I wondered why the dead woman looked the way she

l with her teeth clamped tight together and her thin blue lips drawn ck a little ways. She looked, I thought, as if she had just come back from ong fight, and had lost in the fight. I wished in a dim sort of way that she uld know The Ladies Aid had spent three dollars for white roses. I ought it would have made her feel better.

Susie's father wheeled the coffin down the aisle. The rollers made a le squeaking as they rolled over the carpet, and the white roses quivered til one pale petal slipped loose and fell behind the coffin. Laurie Mae and looked straight in front of her until the coffin was going through door into the vestibule. She got up then, and took the ragged bundle m the seat and laid it carefully on her arm, and walked slowly down aisle. All the ladies looked at her and the bundle, but she did not look anything.

When the coffin was in the vestibule Mrs. Crabtree and Mrs. Rankin rted whispering. We turned around to listen. "Not so much as a thank- u for all we've done," Mrs. Crabtree said.

"As soon as I heard that she was dead I went right up there into that ," Mrs. Rankin said.

Mrs. Hyden and some other ladies left their places in the choir and ned them. Mrs. Hyden leaned over me to talk to Mrs. Crabtree and I ld feel her fat breasts on my shoulder. "What about the roses?" she d. "You're not going to send them to the cemetery?"

"No," Mrs. Crabtree said. "I had thought we might give Laurie Mae ne and keep the others for the sewing circle tomorrow afternoon."

"What would Laurie Mae do with roses?" Susie's mother said.

"We could give her just a few . . . I think maybe we ought to."

"I'll go see to it," Mrs. Crabtree said, and got up.

We followed her to the church door, where men were carrying the in down the high steps. Susie's father had taken away the roses and od holding them all bundled in his hands. Mrs. Crabtree took them. looked at the flowers and arranged them in a neat bouquet. When she finished arranging them, she turned the bouquet round and round and ked at it. She saw the rose with the petal missing and took it out. Then took out five others.

Laurie Mae stood on the top step watching the men carry down the coffin. For a moment it looked as if they were going to drop it and Susie and I held our breaths. Mrs. Crabtree tapped Laurie Mae on the shoulder. "Here are some roses," she said, and handed her the six roses. "Reverend Lipscomb will drive you to the cemetery in his buggy."

Laurie Mae took the roses and did not say anything. She waited until the coffin was down and in the hearse, and then went to the buggy. Susie and I watched to see how she would manage. Reverend Lipscomb hadn't come out of the church, and no one offered to help her into the buggy. She tried first to step in it with the roses and the baby and almost fell over into the muddy road. Then she laid the baby and the roses on the seat and climbed in.

Susie and I followed the hearse and buggy. The grave was on the far side of the cemetery away from the road where there were no fine big tombstones, and the weeds and grass from the summer stood high and brown. We walked up to the edge of the grave and stood while the coffin was lowered, and Reverend Lipscomb said a short prayer.

The others went away then, and left us to watch the men throw the yellow dirt in. Laurie Mae stood behind us a few feet away and watched the men, too. "She means to put the roses on the grave," Susie whispered.

Laurie Mae didn't do that. When the men were finished she turned and started home. "Let's go after her and ask to see the baby," Susie said.

"Mama wouldn't want me to be seen talking with her," I said, and hung back until Susie ran past me calling, "We want to see the baby, Laurie Mae."

The girl stopped and laid the roses on the ground and with her free hand upwrapped the bundle. We stood without saying anything and looked at the baby. I didn't think it was a pretty baby. It's head was too big with the veins showing in its face. "Doesn't it ever cry?" Susie asked.

"No," Laurie Mae said. "He hardly ever cries." Her voice sounded hoarse and rusty as if she had not used it in a long time. She wrapped the baby up again, and picked up the roses.

"Don't you think they're pretty roses," I said.

"They cost three dollars," Susie said.

"Three dollars," Laurie Mae said, and stopped and looked at the flowers.

We thought she would be pleased to know The Ladies Aid had spent so much. Her voice sounded full of something else. We didn't know what it was. "Three dollars is a lot of money," Susie said.

"I know," Laurie Mae said. "It's a lot of money."

We left her then, for she could walk but slowly with the baby and the roses. Susie left me at the cemetery gate for she went one way and I another. I slipped behind the concrete pillars of the gate and waited. I wanted to see Laurie Mae. I thought that now she was alone she might cry. I wanted to see her cry.

She came out of the gate and looked all around; up and down the road, and at the nearest houses, and up into the snowy sky. When she saw no one she laid the baby on the ground, and took the white roses one by one and threw them in the yellow mud of the road. She pushed them out of sight with her foot and raked the mud over them, and then she picked up the baby.

RURAL RESETTLEMENT

Will W. Alexander

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT became involved in the field of rural rehabilitation and resettlement when it assumed the responsibility of caring for the victims of the depression. Approximately 1,400,000 rural families were included on the nation's relief rolls. Studies of this problem readily revealed two major factors to be dealt with. Rock-bottom agricultural prices during the early years of the depression had taken their toll of farm operators through foreclosure and bankruptcy, just as low industrial prices created havoc among industrial and commercial businesses. The livelihood of farm workers was destroyed by the operation of forces similar to those which had thrown millions of urban employees out of work. Of deeper significance, however, was the non-emergency phase of the rural relief problem which was composed of a series of chronic maladjustments that had existed through several decades.

A readjustment of price relationships would help to restore the temporarily distressed farmer to a position of independence similar to that which he had enjoyed before the depression. What was needed in the second instance was to formulate methods of correcting basic economic maladjustments, which, if allowed to continue, would prevent the reëstablishment of a sound economy in several so-called rural problem areas.

Previous to the spring of 1935, there had already been initiated in various federal agencies a number of rural settlement and rehabilitation programs. Some of these activities, like the program of rural rehabilitation

leveloped by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, were definitely inked to the problem of alleviating emergency conditions brought on by lrought and depression. Others, like the Land Program carried out under he joint sponsorship of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and he Agricultural Adjustment Administration, involved more permanent ocial and economic improvements. Likewise older government bureaus uch as the Forest Service of the Department of Agriculture and the Bureau f Reclamation of the Department of the Interior have developed significant rograms of long time import.

With the reorientation of the federal relief activity following the passage by Congress of the Emergency Relief Act of 1935, these various rural programs were brought together under one administrative agency. The ntimate relationship existing among all of them made this step eminently lesirable. At the same time it was evident that the problem of decreasing ural relief rolls was essentially different from that of providing jobs for he temporarily unemployed workers in industrial centers. Accordingly, he Resettlement Administration was established by the President on April 30, 1935.

In the Executive Order setting up this new agency, three major functions were designated. It was to administer approved projects involving the resettlement of destitute or low-income families from both rural and urban areas. It was empowered to carry out a series of land conservation projects. Finally, to it was charged the duty of helping farm families on relief to become independent by extending to them both financial and technical assistance.

The emergency phase of the Resettlement Administration's program has been termed *rural rehabilitation*. Its goal is not merely to help destitute farm families obtain the minimum of food and clothing during this year and next, but to help make them once more independent. Every family for whom a successful rehabilitation plan is worked out, therefore, is a family taken off the public relief rolls. This work is at present the largest element in the rural program. Some 500,000 farm families, who have neither been on relief nor faced the immediate prospect of applying for public aid, have been accepted for rehabilitation by the Resettlement Administration. The care of these families occupies the full time of the largest

division of that agency, which maintains not only a small Washington force, but also an organization which reaches into every state.

Rural rehabilitation combines the abilities of the small farmer with the technical resources at the command of the government. The county rehabilitation agents, through whom contact is made with the individual farm families have, broad responsibilities. Their first job is to sift the vast numbers of applicants to determine which families possess the proper land and the right character and ability to make them appropriate recipients of a government loan. Most of the families who ask for this aid have lost all their resources of cash and credit, and have been bereft even of their work animals, livestock, farm machinery, and tools. The rehabilitation agent must attempt to discover the most economical investment which will enable each family to resume its own farming operations successfully. Often this means that an improved plan of farm management must be drawn up, and a family budget prepared to cover the periodic repayments of the loan, property taxes, and the normal requirements of the family for food and clothing.

"Live at home" is a slogan that is put into practice on thousands of rehabilitation farms when the budget has been drawn up and the farm management plan prepared. Throughout some of the poorer sections of the United States farmers are thus learning the value of giving their first attention to providing food for home consumption as a means of increasing their real income.

Rural rehabilitation is naturally more in demand in the large cash-crop areas than in those where a self-sufficient type of agriculture continues to be practiced. The drought of 1934-35 wiped out the resources of many good farmers in areas which under normal conditions are admirably suited to the type of agriculture in common practice. In general, the rural rehabilitation program has been as widely distributed over the United States as is the works relief program, its urban counterpart.

One widespread and basic cause of the existence of large relief problems in certain rural areas is the exhaustion of timber and mineral resources in areas formerly dependent upon these as sources of income. The now almost familiar figure of the "stranded" miner and forest worker of the Southern Appalachians epitomizes this situation. Not recent years, but recent decades have seen the undermining of the economic structure of

hese communities by the destruction of forests, and abandonment of mines. Today we must decide whether we shall continue to maintain several hundred thousand people on public relief, or whether through the government, steps cannot be taken to restore to these people a normal economic opportunity.

The problem is an oft-repeated one. The South knows it not only in the mountains, but in the cut-over areas of the Atlantic and Gulf Coast pine forest, where the local economy has been ruined by the devastation of its chief natural resource. Similar conditions are found in the cut-over areas of the Great Lakes and the Pacific Northwest. If the land were productive enough to make agriculture possible, the problem would be simple. Instead, sandy soils have proved unresponsive to agricultural effort, while the thin soils of the mountain lands have been quickly washed down the steep slopes after the cover was removed.

Another process of the past which has left its mark on the present economy of the South is the steady exhaustion of once fertile farmland. Not long ago it was announced that the government was buying out some of the plantations once owned by certain of the historic families of South Carolina. Because of constant emphasis on cotton cultivation, and because of insufficient attention to the dangers of erosion or the need for conservation of fertility, the productivity of these lands was destroyed. There is a grim warning in seeing the economic base of a rich culture extracted from the earth or washed down to the sea. Hundreds of thousands of acres in the old cotton belt of the South alone, and additional portions of other agricultural areas, have been rendered unfit for farming because of this process. As a result great numbers of families are left as completely stranded as the mountaineer upon his ravished forest land.

Drought brought to our attention a third major contribution of the past to our present rural problems—the settlement of thousands of families on land that we now know was never suited to the cultivation of crops. Dust storms blowing fertile soil from the western plains across the continent focused national attention upon the problem of the dry land farmer whose lot has been drought, year after year. In our one hundred and fifty years of settlement, farming operations were pushed into every quarter of the United States. Any process so unrestrained, so completely unplanned,

and so irrational was bound to meet with certain failure along with the vast success which greeted our efforts to subdue the continent. Rehabilitation cannot be effective here so long as families remain dependent on land that will not support them.

The increasing prevalence of tenancy is a fourth major problem which affects the restoration of rural prosperity in the United States. The South knows well how the share-cropping system, the most vicious form of tenancy, can prevent the economic and therefore the social progress of communities where that system is rife. It is unnecessary to indict tenancy in all forms. Traditionally, in certain parts of the country the progress of the individual American farmer has been from farm laborer to tenant to farm owner. But such a progression has been an ideal seldom realized in many areas. Furthermore, certain speculative features even in farm ownership have clouded the ideal.

The American dream has been one of individual farm ownership. Our whole agricultural and land policy has in the past been directed towards that goal. Yet during the years since the war, tenancy has increased steadily. Today almost half of the farms and almost half of the farmland of the United States are operated by tenant farmers. Tenancy at its best need not conflict with a high character of life. But tenancy all too often is not at its best, and implies depletion of soil fertility, and instability of farm homes and communities, and in the South, a dependency upon supervision and control which is inconsistent with the ideals of self-reliant individuals.

Land is the basis of rural economy. Agriculture, forestry, and outdoor recreational activities are equally dependent upon it. Any program of rehabilitation must start with the land. During recent years, surveys have been carried out to determine the nature and extent of our national land problem. Several striking facts have been revealed. It has been pointed out, for example, that about 650,000 farms, covering more than 100,000,000 acres, could be more efficiently used if converted from the cultivation of crops to cattle ranching, forestry, and other conservational purposes. Expressed in other terms, this situation points to the desirability of shifting approximately one-tenth of our total number of farms to uses other than crop production. High percentages of tax-delinquency, the enforced abandonment of much farmland, and excessive costs to local governments

incurred in the servicing of such areas, are evidences pointing to the misuse of land as one cause of social and economic maladjustment.

The Resettlement Administration is not only continuing the necessary studies of land-use problems, but is executing a nationwide program of projects demonstrating the conversion of land to better uses as a means of improving rural economic resources. The program approved to date (December 1, 1935) involves 208 projects in forty-four states. Approximately 9,980,000 acres are being purchased. The work of reforesting these lands, controlling erosion, developing recreational facilities, and restoring the pasture grasses on them has already commenced. In the eastern states, and in the South, the major use of the unproductive land will be forestry and recreation. In the western plains and other dry-farming areas, the land will, for the most part, be restored to grazing.

The Sand Hills land-use project in southern North Carolina embodies a typical story associated with many land-use problems. The area has long been recognized as presenting serious difficulties. A large number of families unable to support themselves on their own farms have been forced to ask for public relief.

Successive waves of speculation had induced one crop of unfortunate victims after the other to invest their savings in the land. Originally it was hailed as a cotton area. When cotton farming failed, the emphasis was changed to fruit. Enough orchards lasted a few years to convince hundreds of families that the land was worth developing. Eventually the fruit also failed and brought a new harvest of bankruptcy. Tobacco was a third crop for which the area was hailed as ideal—again without foundation. Soil analysis and the experience of farmers have proved the land contains too much loose, sandy soil to make possible the successful cultivation of any agricultural crop. At the same time, the natural reproduction of the long-leaf pine forest is demonstrating the potential value of this land for forest purposes.

Under the land-use program, approximately 60,000 acres of this area are being purchased. Farmers now attempting vainly to make a living from the poor soil will be helped by this purchase, as well as by additional credit facilities if necessary, to move out to better lands. The whole area, solidly blocked in to permit satisfactory administration, will be placed

under sustained-yield management as a forest. Nurseries have already been established to provide planting stock. Problems of local public finance are being alleviated by the payment of all delinquent taxes through the purchase of the land, and by the discontinuance of certain schools and roads which now are liabilities on the state and county budgets. Finally, by making this demonstration, the government is taking a positive step to protect other prospective purchasers from investing in similar lands nearby which are no better suited to agricultural use.

In the Southern Appalachians, and in the cut-over pine forests along the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts of the South, there are millions of acres which, because of the physical and economic characteristics of the land, are better suited to forestry, with perhaps some stock grazing, than to any other purpose. The population of most of these areas once depended upon forest employment to supplement the small garden patches that partially provided them with food. Cutting off the forest robbed them of their basic resources. In each of these areas, and in every state of the South, the Resettlement Administration is undertaking projects similar to the one described in the previous paragraph, in order to restore their source of wealth.

It seems highly impossible, however, that the federal government should purchase all of the misused land in the United States, or even all of the 100,000,000 acres designated as desirable for conversion to other uses than farming. Private enterprise will accomplish some changes. State and local governments will be required to play an even greater part. In their hands rests the responsibility for preventing future misuse of land. They alone are in a position to take positive action in regard to tax-delinquent land that reverts to the state, and has proved worthless for crop production. In this respect our public policies towards land lag far behind the requirements of sound economy. The federal projects now being undertaken will provide concrete demonstration of the results which may be expected from a wiser public use of land in distressed rural areas.

Frequently restoration of the forest cover, or the development of wildlife and recreation opportunities on public land, will provide additional sources of employment for the local population. It is sometimes possible for the people dependent on the land to be rehabilitated without moving from their present homes. More often, areas which have been intensively used in

the past are now over-populated, and should be partially evacuated. Other areas should be evacuated to eliminate the need for costly public services. The purchase of land for conservation purposes is usually accompanied by resettlement of a large proportion of the families living on the land acquired. Both the purchase of land and resettlement are carried out on a completely voluntary basis. Hard economic facts and severe poverty have already settled all argument as to the desirability of moving out of the problem areas.

Rural resettlement constitutes the third major phase of the Resettlement Administration's program. This work is from some angles the most difficult, for it deals directly with the uncertain forces of human psychology. The government cannot regard human beings simply as an "element of production" and move them like pawns on a chess table. If the work of resettlement is to be effective, it must give full play to the native initiative and energy of the people concerned. That is the basic reason why any talk of obligatory resettlement is absurd.

Partly because of these difficulties, the Resettlement Administration is limiting its present activities which actually involve moving people to a maximum of 15,000 families. Many of these will come from the areas of unproductive farmland withdrawn from arable agriculture. Others will be those who might qualify for "rehabilitation" loans if they had land of sufficient quality to permit success. Some resettlement opportunities will be made available to tenant farmers who would be better off with their own farms.

Resettlement plans will be sufficiently diverse in nature to take into consideration many of the changing aspects of Southern agriculture and rural life. Certain projects are under way which are built around a combination of part-time farming and rural industry such as has been spontaneously developed in many rural communities of the South following the influx of new industries. More of the resettlement farms, however, will be full-time agricultural enterprises. Just as in the individual cases of rural rehabilitation, financial aid in resettlement will be accompanied by technical advice.

When a family's application for resettlement is accepted, every consideration is given to its specific needs and abilities. The pattern of a resettlement project must be made to fit the individuals. Some farms will be

separate tracts located in communities already well established. In other instances farms can be more economically developed when grouped together. Social life can take on a more attractive aspect in these communities, while public services can be provided at a lower cost. Coöperative purchasing and marketing and credit facilities will be fostered wherever these methods promise greater returns for the farm families. Coöperative enterprises are viewed with particular favor since they provide a means for securing to these people the advantages of larger operations and at the same time foster incentives to efficient handling of personal responsibilities.

Resettlement and land planting, usually related to rural regions, are of equal importance in suburban areas. The sporadic, undirected growth of our large metropolitan regions has occurred with little consideration for the homes and living conditions of workers with low incomes. Into the country has poured the unsightliness of cheap subdivision developments, often accompanied by industry. Slum living has been the only possibility for many urban workers. To meet the need for improved suburban living, there has been established the fourth program of the Resettlement Administration.

Suburban resettlement projects are designed to provide inexpensive dwellings for low-income industrial workers. Superficially, the most obvious difference between these projects and the usual slum clearance projects is their location in suburban areas rather than in the city. Fundamentally, there is a more important distinction. They are being undertaken as an element in the broader regional planning of metropolitan areas, and are directed towards a better use of the suburban lands which now fall prey to the conflicting and mutually destructive effects of uncoördinated exploitation.

One of these projects is to be located near Bound Brook, New Jersey, within the metropolitan area of New York City. Its location was decided upon after an exhaustive survey of the region to determine not only where relatively inexpensive land was available, but where economic opportunities were such as to offer the best chances for continued employment. Thus at the start, the residential area was conceived with relation to the economy of the district which it would serve. Transportation lines, existing factories, types of industries, and already existing housing facilities were among the factors considered.

Because of the availability of cheaper land than could possibly be found within the city, a project of a different nature is possible. It will, in the first place, cover a larger area. Not only the actual dwellings, housing about 1,000 families, will be included, but also recreational facilities, stores, schools, and other necessary community buildings. Finally, around the whole project will be a "greenbelt," a strip of land devoted to recreation and gardens. The purpose of this area is not only to reserve land for these uses, but also to protect the residential community from undesirable encroachments by industry or other commercial developments. Such improvements as underpasses, rather than street crossing, and walks which will enable children to go to and from school without running the risk of crossing heavy traffic routes, are included. Unified control will prevent any breaking up of the community.

The garden city, as this type of development has been termed by some, is not an entirely new thing. The restricted residential areas which we know as Druid Hills, near Atlanta, or Tuxedo Park, near New York, or Grosse Pointe, near Detroit, were constructed with similar restrictions. However, such developments have been possible only for the most wealthy families. Those in the lowest income brackets have had to be content with depreciated quarters in blighted areas or jerry-built suburbs. The four large suburban resettlement projects of the Resettlement Administration aim to show how garden-city advantages can be made available to families of low income if the communities are planned with care and constructed with the utmost economy.

Caution and realism must be employed in the execution of this many-sided program. The emergency phase of the Resettlement Administration's work, that is, the extension of rural rehabilitation loans, is not concerned so deeply with long-time policies, and can therefore proceed with a maximum of speed. But the rural task is in reality one of basic readjustment in those broad problem-areas which darken so large a portion of the map of the United States. It is the long-time program which is significant for the future of American rural life.

However, the Resettlement Administration was created under an emergency act of Congress, and charged with the responsibility for reducing public relief problems in rural areas. At the same time it finds itself facing

the need for executing a long-term program if the work is to be at all soundly conceived and permanent in value. The pressure for hasty accomplishment and rapid decision on matters of basic importance does not contribute to satisfactory progress.

Other difficulties are no less serious. The problem of rural improvement makes demands for a far larger personnel than is now available and trained for the task. It is no routine job to be handled with printed forms and mimeographed rules. It requires a soundness of outlook that comes only from intimate human contact with the problems at hand. Thorough scientific knowledge must go hand in hand with an insight into human nature. Prejudices of all kinds must be overcome. The supercilious attitude of the city dweller for rural folk must change. Economic limitations imposed by race prejudice must be migitated. Such a distortion of human relations as is typified by the term "white trash" must disappear. Finally, sectionalism in planning or in outlook must be thrown aside, for national progress is the only clue to sound regional or sectional prosperity.

As against these handicaps which are imposed upon this work, there can be pointed out several favorable factors. There is no doubt that the American people are more seriously interested in doing a successful job of rehabilitation today than they have been for many years past. Nature has helped somewhat by dramatizing some of the causes of the present destitution. The depression uncovered to our eyes many of the sore spots which had existed unnoticed for decades previous. Revolting against the ugliness and futility of continuing these conditions, the American people are demanding a program for the achievement of a standard of living such as American resources should make possible.

Science has lent a hand. New developments in soil science and better means of classifying land should insure us from repeating the mistakes in land-use which former generations could not help making. Improved technique for farm management, soil conservation, and timber culture widen the opportunities for a stable rural economy. The growth of coöperative effort, through which alone individualism can be protected in a highly interdependent society, provides another firm foundation upon which to build.

It is probable that the future will make increasingly important the

ways in which people are enabled to win a livelihood from the land. Several hundred thousand people are already dammed up in rural areas who would under pre-depression conditions have migrated to the city and taken jobs in industry. Our basic problem is to encourage those natural trends which will make possible a sound rural and farm life without aggravating the surpluses which now exist. Several tendencies indicate that this will be possible.

The South, as one of the greatest cash-crop producing areas of American agriculture, is one of those where the future course of agricultural development will most directly affect the problem of surpluses. Practically all students of Southern agriculture have stressed the need for an increasing diversification of products. Not only will this mean a shift from cotton to other well-known crops, but probably an introduction of new crops which will meet the requirements of new conditions. A homely illustration of this situation may be gained from the picture of the cotton share-cropper who has produced nothing but cotton all his life, and whose family has been undernourished because of insufficient cash with which to buy food. A shift in his farm economy will first of all supply a well-balanced diet and secondly will reduce his cotton crop. A greater number of people living on the land does not necessarily mean greater cash-crop surpluses if proper attention is given to non-agricultural uses of land as well as to more varied types of farm management.

Changes of this sort are encouraged by the resettlement program because in the long run they will be essential to the sound reorganization of Southern agriculture. They are based upon the normal demands of a more satisfactory standard of living.

It is necessary to look forward to constant change. New forms of rural economy will be developed that today we do not foresee. New relationships will grow up between agriculture and industry. Populations will continue to shift of their own accord. The one constant factor to be maintained throughout these changes is the objective of developing a pattern of rural life which will be worthy of American standards.

HISTORY AS A CURATIVE

Benjamin B. Kendrick

WHAT IS the function of history? Is it critical research, or philosophy, or is it a curative? But the historians are not in agreement.

At the 1934 meeting of the American Historical Association in Washington a number of the members presenting papers edified their hearers by reflecting upon the nature of their discipline. This recreation, indulged in but sparingly by the older school of American historians in recent years, has become a favorite pastime of the more speculative-minded historical guildsmen. But no American is the clearly recognized dean of the historical philosophers (or should we say philosophical historians?), although the late Henry Adams in his lifetime might have been so classified. More recently, Charles A. Beard has become, for a fraction at least, the inspiring genius. Another fraction, however, is only mildly sympathetic with Beard's emphasis on economic interpretation. While they admit that he has directed "attention upon aspects of past events which no historian can afford to neglect," nevertheless they contend that by "adopting this credo they [Beard and his followers] forego all possibility of variety in interpretation or of impartiality in judgment."

The foregoing quotations are from a paper read before the 1934 meeting of the Historical Association by Professor Theodore Clarke Smith of Williams College. It is hardly necessary to point out that Professor Smith pleads for a return to the search for "objective truth" which, he asserts, was a "clear-cut ideal . . . presented to the world first in Germany, and

ater accepted everywhere." He further implies that the American Historical Association in its beginning in 1884 was dedicated to the "objective ruth" ideal. It was faithfully followed in the main by the members during the first half of the Association's existence. "One need only mention he general onslaught on the Reconstruction period which took place at Columbia under the guidance of our former honored associate, Professor Dunning; or the powerful influence exerted at the University of Wisconsin y the seminar of our late colleague, Professor F. J. Turner."

During the latter half of the period, however, many historians, beginning with James Harvey Robinson and Charles A. Beard, have gone in uest of strange gods, but Professor Smith is emboldened to believe that he Old Guard, composed of the objective truth seekers, still has a "noble ream" which gives vitality. If it must go down before its antagonists, he xpresses the hope that it will do so in no weak surrender to those who ould make of history an "instrument of entertainment or of social con-ol" but "with our flags flying."

Unfortunately, neither Dr. Robinson nor Dr. Beard was present at e meeting to reply to the aspersions upon their positions and influence. o the October, 1935, issue of the *American Historical Review,* however, r. Beard, in his most urbane style, contributed a brief communication, hich at once clarifies his own position and leaves that of Professor Smith sad confusion. Suffice it to say that he undertakes to show that objective uth in history is a chimera and is as difficult to bring down to earth as Platonic Idea. The historian who believes that he can present the results his researches, uninfluenced by his own religious, social, economic, olitical, racial, sectional, or national biases, "is doubly partial and utterly evoid of any sense for reality and humor." This is not to say that the storian who approaches his subject with the frank avowal of intention subject it to economic, psycho-analytical, racial, geographic, or some her sort of interpretation, either with or without a view to using it as instrument of social control, is any less honest in his endeavor to give true account of what actually happened than is the historian who prosses to be seeking objective truth for its own sake. Not only may he be as nest but also he may be just as "scientific," if that much-vaunted term s applicability in either case.

II

But for illustration: can anyone who has read both books deny that Beard in his *Economic Interpretation of the Constitution* made as careful an investigation of the facts and presented them as honestly as did, say, Andrew C. McLaughlin in his *The Confederation and the Constitution?* (The latter is Volume Ten of the American Nation Series edited by A. B. Hart, whom Professor Smith commends as an objective truth seeker.) As implied above, both Beard and McLaughlin make every effort to present the facts as they were. But each selects quite a different set of facts—the former to show that the economic interests of most of the founding fathers and other Americans similarly situated were directly and immediately served by the adoption of the new instrument; the latter to prove that

> a federal constitution was formed, having for its purpose the preservation of local rights, the establishment of national authority, the reconciliation of the particular interests and the general welfare. In solving the problem of imperial organization, America made a momentous contribution to the political knowledge of mankind.

Now Beard neither denies nor affirms any of these excellencies. So far as I know, it is his opinion that, in the main, the general welfare was served by discarding the Articles and adopting the Constitution. But he is not biased on the subject, while it is clear that McLaughlin is. No doubt the fathers believed sincerely that they were concerned primarily with the *general* welfare and only secondarily with their *particular interests*. It is also true that ex-President Hoover, ex-Attorney-General Beck, and ex-Democratic candidates for president, Davis and Smith, are convinced that they are serving the general welfare and enthroning Liberty in their efforts to discredit and terminate the New Deal. Let us suppose that in the coming election the New Deal and all its works are buried forever beneath an avalanche of Liberty League and Republican votes. Will the historian of the year 2000 be charged with partiality if he point out that Mr. Davis and Mr. Beck were attorneys for large corporations and holding companies whose interests were threatened by Mr. Roosevelt's mild variety of social planning? Will it be "scientific" to write of the New Dealers as "ignorant, suspicious, and bigoted men" who brought the country into disrepute?

It happens that when the Constitution was being formed and put to operation, Rhode Island was trying a new deal of its own, not altogether unlike Mr. Roosevelt's, for under it, hard-pressed debtors were permitted to liquidate their obligations in what ex-Governor Alfred E. Smith would denominate "baloney" dollars. The inflationists in the little state opposed the Constitution and a majority of the free-holders voted against its adoption. It was this action which over a century later brought down upon them Professor McLaughlin's censorious words.

III

And so it all comes down to Professor Carl Becker's thesis that "Every man is his own historian"; that is, if he is interested in that sort of thing. Thus it happens that each of us can dig down into the great mine of historical facts and prove a case for or against this man or that policy, or give the facts a Marxian or anti-Marxian, a sex, a social, a geographic, *Zeitgeist,* or God-knows-what other sort of interpretation. And the beauty about it all is that we can be perfectly "scientific" about it. We don't need to falsify a single fact and can cite chapter and verse in the "sources" for every sentence we write. As Dr. Beard says, only the romantic and the humorless can dupe themselves into believing they are being "objective." But I submit that in so far as we take ourselves seriously in proving a particular thesis or giving a certain interpretation, we, too, are devoid of humor and realism.

Most of us are obliged to take ourselves seriously or go out of business. If we all wrote humorous histories the discipline would soon cease to be a required subject in school and college, and then, where would all of us be? For one thing, only a cad would be a traitor to his friends and fellow craftsmen. What really got Robinson and Beard out of the good graces of the Old Guard was the frank admission that, in their quest for facts, they had a teleological objective and not a truth-for-truth's-sake one. Even this was considered a too facetious treatment of history and bordered on treason. Hence Professor Smith's paper.

Statesmen, bankers, ministers, admirals, psychiatrists, and historians must conduct themselves, at least where their own profession is concerned, with proper decorum. And this obligation rests upon none more heavily

than the historian. For history is, above all things, a compensatory device for peoples suffering from a sense of inferiority and frustration. Point to a single nationality in Europe, with the possible exception of the Russians, which does not find some compensation for present inadequacies in their "glorious" past. Moreover, an appeal to the belief in a glorious past may work as a powerful stimulant to what the Italians call *Risorgimento*. To what extent does the "grandeur that was Rome" account for the success of Il Duce?

The value of the historian who performs this "curative" function was ably presented at the 1934 meeting of the Association by Dr. Eugen Rosenstock-Hüssy, of Harvard University. Also, Professor Benedetto Croce, universally recognized as the international dean of philosophical historians, sent over from Italy a paper in which he divided historians into three groups: the critical scholars (the spade-workers or fact-finders), the philosophical historians (that is, the meditators on the thoughts and motives which lie back of men's actions), and the "oratorical" historians (whom we may identify with those whom Dr. Rosenstock-Hüssy praises for the "curative" functions they perform). While Professor Croce, quite naturally, regards the philosophical as the *true* historians, he finds the spade-workers absolutely necessary, and he even has a good word for the oratorical historians provided they rid themselves of the present tendency "to excite class, racial, or national antagonisms" and confine themselves to writing of men, nations, or events" in order to derive comfort, encouragement, admonition, or food for meditation."

IV

All these matters come to a head in the examination of a recent book. About the time Professor Croce's paper was being read in Washington, Dr. W. E. Burghardt Du Bois completed in Atlanta a new book on the old topic of Reconstruction in the South, *Black Reconstruction: An Essay Toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1935). In his foreword Dr. Du Bois, without, of course, employing the term, honestly classifies himself as an "oratorical" historian. Here are his words:

It would be only fair to the reader to say frankly in advance that the attitude of any person toward this story will be distinctly influenced by his theories of the Negro race. If he believes that the Negro in America and in general is an average and ordinary human being, who under given environment develops like other human beings, then he will read this story and judge it by the facts adduced. If, however, he regards the Negro as a distinctly inferior creation, who can never successfully take part in modern civilization and whose emancipation and enfranchisement were gestures against nature, then he will need something more than the sort of facts that I have set down. But this latter person, I am not trying to convince. I am simply pointing out these two points of view, so obvious to Americans, and then without further ado, I am assuming the truth of the first. In fine, I am going to tell this story as though Negroes were ordinary human beings, realizing that this attitude will from the first seriously curtail my audience.

Now this is a straightforward statement of positions for which Dr. u Bois is to be commended. Having displayed his own bias, it is perctly natural that he should have a poor opinion of those numerous authors ho have assumed an opposite attitude, who, as Dr. Du Bois says, "believe e Negro to be sub-human and congenitally unfitted for citizenship and e suffrage." It is too bad that Professor Smith could not have seen Dr. u Bois's list of biased historians before he wrote the paper which he read Washington. At the head of the roll is the name of the late John W. urgess, who perhaps as much as any other man was responsible for introucing the German *Historismus* into American universities and whose ography Dr. Du Bois gives somewhat inaccurately. Also on Dr. Du ois's list appears the name of the late Professor Dunning (whom Prossor Smith praises for his objectivity), and a number of his more disnguished students, William K. Boyd, William W. Davis, Joseph G. De . Hamilton, Charles W. Ramsdell, Thomas S. Staples, C. Mildred Thompn, Holland Thompson, and the late Walter P. Fleming and Ulrich B. illips. With the exception of Professor Davis, I know (or *knew* in the se of Fleming and Phillips) all these scholars and have read nearly erything they have written. I do not believe their attitude toward the

Negro is quite so extreme as Dr. Du Bois insists it is. However, I do take the responsibility of conceding for them (they may wish to repudiate me) that they too are oratorical historians and wrote for curative purposes. Doubtless all of them believe (or at least believed at the time that they were writing) that the Reconstruction Acts of 1867 which replaced the rebel states under military rule and laid upon army officers the duty of establishing new state governments based upon universal Negro suffrage were, to paraphrase Napoleon, "worse than a crime"—a blunder. Dr. Du Bois, on the other hand, while agreeing that it was unfortunate that the Negroes were not better prepared by education and experience for the use of the ballot, contends that the Acts were in line with what he designates as the abolition-democracy trend which had been developing in America for a century; that it was the only practical way to prevent the return of the Negroes to slavery in a modified apprenticeship or peonage form, break forever the power of the Southern plantation-owning Bourbons, and make the Negroes an integral part of the abolition-democracy forces.

The ideal of abolition-democracy, as Dr. Du Bois conceives it, was the proprietorship of a small farm, workshop, or other petty business enterprise for every citizen, black or white, and a system of free public schools, libraries, and other educational and cultural institutions dedicated to the enrichment of intellectual and spiritual life and the improvement of manners and morals. It follows from the desirability of these objectives that it was a great misfortune that Thaddeus Stevens' plan for confiscating the large plantations of rebel owners and breaking them up into small independent farms, including forty acres free to each Negro head of a family, and Charles Sumner's cherished idea of a nationally supported system of schools for the freedmen, were not comprehended in the Reconstruction Acts. Had both schemes been written into the laws, Dr. Du Bois thinks the new governments established in the Southern States would have had a much better chance of permanent success. It would have been a particularly wise policy had the disinherited poor whites been included in both Stevens' and Sumner's plans, for then they, too, might have been joined to the forces of abolition-democracy. As it was, they gained nothing from the Reconstruction Acts, for they already had the right to vote. The

granting of this privilege to the Negro, against whom they had a deep-seated racial antagonism, only served to make them the willing tools of the Bourbons in their efforts to regain control of the state governments. As members of the Ku Klux Klan, the White Camelia, and other secret societies of the sort, the poor whites fought vigorously against abolition-democracy and, ironically enough, unwittingly for their own further degradation. For Dr. Du Bois argues that had the poor whites coöperated with, instead of opposing, the new state governments, the beneficial features of Stevens' and Sumner's plans might have been realized through state action. As it was, the power of the Negroes alone was too insecure and too brief to accomplish much, although beginnings were made in the organization of free public schools where both white and black children could receive the rudiments of an education.

Besides the opposition to the old planter aristocracy and the poor whites, other factors making for the failure of the Reconstruction governments were the rascality and incompetence of many of the carpet-baggers, most of the scalawags, and even some of the Negro leaders. But with respect to these last, Dr. Du Bois maintains that, while some were guilty of petty graft, they were for the most part good and frequently able men, sincerely desirous of improving the lot of workers in general and of Negro workers in particular. Although the members of their race furnished nearly all the votes to maintain the Radical or Republican party in control of the Southern state governments, in the tripartite division of the offices among the leaders, their portion was the least. In the exercise of such little power as they had, they were generally moderate, good-tempered, and considerate, and certainly as honest, public-spirited, and intelligent as their white contemporaries and successors in the South and in other parts of the country. Dr. Du Bois further maintains that the assumption of anti-Negro historians that the Reconstruction state governments in the South were unspeakably corrupt and venal, is based upon *ex parte* evidence largely manufactured by investigating committees appointed by Southern legislatures after the native-whites had regained control. In these investigations the participants in the Reconstruction governments were not represented, and indictments made by their opponents went unchallenged, and therefore were subsequently accepted by historians as proved, when in fact they were only the charges of bitterly hostile political antagonists.

V

With Dr. Du Bois's position I have much sympathy. Given the fact of the overthrow of Southern civilization by violence, which in destroying the planter influence in national affairs gave unbridled power too suddenly and completely into the hands of upstart, money-mad men who lacked both the ability and the desire to create a genuinely civilized society, I have long been convinced that the best Reconstruction Policy would have included the establishment in the South of small independent proprietorships (perhaps entailed for a generation or two) for black and white farmers in place of the old plantations. Accompanying this should have gone a nationally and locally supported system of education with special emphasis on agricultural education, an onslaught on disease and conditions making for ill health, and a program for bringing the races together on a basis of mutual understanding and coöperation. Or to put it differently, both races should have had the benefits of a Bankhead-Jones Bill, plus—beginning seventy years ago!

But this is an idle fancy—romanticism, pure and undefiled. There would have needed to be in Washington a government of wise, beneficent gods instead of stupid, malevolent men. Now it happens that I once made a pretty thorough study of the principal members of the Thirty-Ninth and Fortieth Congresses (1865-1869), and under the influence of my old master, William A. Dunning, I did my level best to be objective, and I think I succeeded as far as it was humanly possible for me to succeed. At the conclusion of my study, although I felt duty-bound to write with restraint, it was my unbiased opinion that in the main the members of those Congresses were mean, bigoted, crafty, self-seeking, and worst of all, stupid. (B. B. Kendrick: *The Journal of the Joint Committee of Fifteen on Reconstruction*. New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1914). It is true that among them lingered many of the phrases of the abolition-democracy ideology, and they mouthed them endlessly, but the fact was that, almost without exception, every mother's son of them had both eyes glued on the main chance. Instead of being integral parts of the abolition-democracy, as Dr. Du Bois thinks was the case in some instances at least, they were in fact integral parts of a haughty, vulgar, young, upstart capitalism which would stop at nothing in its mad career

of money-grabbing. They talked much of freedom and liberty and the rights of the American individual in general and of the Negro in particular, but the word *liberty* had a sinister sound on their lips then, as it does today on the lips of their spiritual descendants—American Liberty Leaguers and Old Guard Republicans.

Now I must do Dr. Du Bois the justice of pointing out that he is not unaware of the fact that the establishment of the Southern Reconstruction governments was in part, at least, attributable to the desire of the buoyant young capitalists to rid themselves of the Southern planter influence in Washington. To that end they threw their weight back of the Radicals and obtained in return immediately every sort of privilege and exemption which their class interest dictated. Dr. Du Bois and I differ only on emphasis. He seems to believe that the main-spring to action came from the abolition-democracy with the capitalists playing only a minor rôle. I contend that it was the other way around; that the principals in the affair were the capitalists; and their henchmen, the politicians, chanted pæans of praise to Liberty, the while they executed their masters' commands. I admit the debate between us cannot be decided by an appeal to the "sources." We can both find support there for our respective contentions. Nor can it be decided on logical grounds. I can point out the paradox of the same set of men establishing privilege in Washington, New York, and Boston with one hand while setting up abolition-democracy in Columbia, Atlanta, and Montgomery with the other. To this Dr. Du Bois can reply that the biggest mistake in the Bible is the statement that one can't serve God and Mammon at the same time; that there is nothing man loves better to do; that Congressmen could and did serve God in Montgomery and Mammon in Washington. But on one point, at least, Dr. Du Bois and I are in agreement: we both believe the proof of the pudding is in the eating, the moral of the tale in the ending. He admits that far more important in bringing about the collapse of the Reconstruction governments in the South than incompetence on the part of the carpet-baggers and scalawags or opposition of planters and poor whites, was the withdrawal of support by Washington. And why was this? Was it because Washington was convinced that abolition-democracy had been rendered impregnable in Montgomery, Columbia, and elsewhere? Or was it because the Repub-

lican politicians and their capitalist friends had become convinced by 1877 that the Southern planters were no longer dangerous to their privileges? That a new class of businessmen-capitalists who spoke their own language, albeit with a sob and a tear for the Lost Cause, was taking command in the South and would henceforth strive valiantly to follow the national (that is, the capitalist) pattern?

Sadly Dr. Du Bois admits that abolition-democracy was dropped out of the windows of the historic Southern state houses with a thud the moment the last corporal's guard marched off the capitol grounds; and from that day to this the devotees of the Grand Old Party of Moral Ideas have made no serious efforts to gather the broken fragments together again. Perhaps it is just as well. I am suspicious of Greeks bearing gifts, as I am of Englishmen taking up the white man's burden in India, of Italians bringing an ancient and grandiose civilization to Ethiopia, or of well-intentioned Abolitionists (or was it capitalists?) bringing the blessings of democracy into the Southland. Nor do I welcome them the more when outsiders come spouting the phrases of Karl Marx and the inevitable class struggle, although I do confess to a certain sympathy with their hostility towards private capitalism.

In undertaking the ordeal of civilization, the South has many and diverse besetments—none more baffling than racial prejudice. And yet I am sure Southern whites and Negroes have more interests in common with one another than either has with any group outside the South. Too long have we each labored under a sense of inferiority and frustration. We have both written our history to cure our disquietude and to comfort our wounded pride. In doing so we have wounded more deeply the pride of each other.

THE FUNCTION OF THE CRITICAL QUARTERLY

Allen Tate

If the quarterly journal has ceased forever to be our popular magazine, may it still be said that the specialized critical quarterly has a "use"? *Use* is a term too slippery to invite definition. Since the time I became aware of the literary magazine, nearly twenty years ago, the declining usefulness of the critical quarterly has been taken for granted, in not very clear terms perhaps, but with certain conviction. The critical quarterly, an austere air plant, has increasingly served the end of acquainting "good writers" with one another's writings. That is a "use" that I, for one, am not prepared to deride. But the unliterary reader is entitled to another sense of usefulness. He is the cultivated layman who felt at one time, say a hundred years ago, that the high places of literature were not beyond his reach: he saw himself and the author in a communion of understanding in which each communicant was necessary to the other.

It is a communion lost to us. The weekly and the monthly, renovated for modern speed of apperception, have captured the intelligent layman entirely. And for a good reason. At his best he likes his "theory," as he educatedly names ideas, mixed unobtrusively into the menagerie of his times: he likes to believe that the literary news of his age can be procured along with the criticism of it. And this was precisely what was procured for him, at a high level of excellence, by the British quarterlies in the day of Lockhart, Jeffrey, and Wilson. The layman found out what was happening at the same time that he was told what it meant.

Doubtless our own splitting off of information from understanding, this modern divorce of action from intelligence, is general, not particular to the arts of literature. If it is a problem that on every hand confronts us, it must affect the policy of the critical review—and tremendously determine it. For the critical review stands for one half of the modern dilemma, the purer half—the intelligence thinking into the moving world a rational order of value.

The critical review then must severely define its relation first to a public and then to its contributors. The editor's attitude towards his contributors, his choice of contributors, and his direction of their work, depend upon the kind of influence that he has decided to exercise.

Our best quarterlies have readers but not enough readers to pay the "cost of production." The quarterly must be subsidized; it either runs on a subsidy or does not run. It cannot define its "use" in terms of the size of its public; and it assumes that the public needs something that it does not want, or—what is the same thing—that a minority wants what the greater public needs. The leading quarterlies are subsidized by universities or are backed, like the late *Hound and Horn,* by persons whose fortunes and enthusiasms may be expected to change. The fate of *The Symposium,* the best critical quarterly ever published in America, offers timely warning to the founder of a review that cannot count upon a subsidy or a private fortune.

There is on record no success for a quarterly review that, in recent times, has tried to compete with the weekly or the monthly. The weekly reader gets the news of books and affairs while it is still, I imagine, hot; and if he longs for a little meditation upon the moving shadows on the wall of the cave, he will take not much more of this than he can get out of the pages of the monthly—regretting that the meditation is a month old and that something new to be meditated upon has, last week or yesterday, risen to invalidate the old meditation. Of course we ought to enjoin the reader to suspect the monthly meditation; it was perhaps not sufficiently considered and fundamental. We ought, in fact, to tell him that the critical quarterly, devoted to principles, can alone give him a meditation of such considered depth that it will illuminate the risen event of yesterday or of tomorrow. But unfortunately the modern reader's synthesizing powers are

limited, and nothing much is applicable to nothing, and the gap between idea and event leaves the reader and the quarterly somewhat high and dry with respect to each other. The quarterly is always too late, even if its standards are not stubbornly too high. If the quarterly imitates the freshness of the weekly, its freshness is necessarily three months stale, refrigerated but not new; and if it envies the liveliness of monthly commentary, its peril is the sacrifice of leisured thought. In either instance the quarterly sacrifices its standards only to attempt a work that it cannot hope to do.

But if the quarterly editor is not forced by poverty to run a monthly *manqué,* his problem at once becomes simpler and more difficult; simpler, because he does not need to find out by trial and error what a paying public will read; more difficult, because he must become himself a first-rate critic in the act of organizing his material, four times a year, into coherent criticism.

The critical performance of the quarterly lies no more in the critical essays than in the "creative" department; fine creative work is a criticism of the second rate, and the critical machinery runs for the protection of that which in itself is the end of criticism. If this observation be extended to society and social criticism, the complete function of the quarterly will emerge. For only the social criticism that instances the value of concrete social experience may be termed properly critical—that is, philosophical. Literature in this broadest sense tells us the meaning of experience, what it is and has been, and it is there that the political and aesthetic departments join.

It is a formidable union, and the difficulty of consummating it may well appall the stoutest editorial heart. Given the freedom to engage the difficulty, the editor is immediately assailed by a series of questions. Is there a critical task that might be done effectively by the quarterly? Can it be done at the present time? If it can, how can it best be done?

Though it would be absurd to say that good critical essays never appear in the monthly magazines, it is yet true that an effective critical program cannot, in that medium, be set forth. The monthly is too close to the weekly, the weekly to the newspaper, for any of these kinds of organ to maintain a critical program in the midst of the more pressing need to report the "scene." If one use of criticism is to make the reader aware of

himself through the literature of his time, and aware, through this literature, of the literature of the past, the critical program must have an objective, and not be contented with partial glimpses or mere reports of points of view. The reader needs more than the mere news that a given point of view exists; he must be initiated into the point of view, saturated with it. The critical program must, then, supply its readers with coherent standards of taste. Mere reporting enjoins the editor to glance at all points of view. The reader gets a "digest" of opinion, not critical thought; and he is encouraged to sample everything but to master nothing.

A sound critical program has at least this one feature: *it allows to the reader no choice in the standards of judgment.* It asks the reader to take a post of observation, and to occupy it long enough to examine closely the field before him, which is presumably the whole field of our experience. This, one supposes, is dogmatism, but it is arguable still that dogma in criticism is a permanent necessity: the value of the dogma will be determined by the quality of the mind engaged in constructing it. For dogma is only coherent thought in the pursuit of principles. If the critic has risen to the plane of principle, and refuses to judge by prejudice, he will, while allowing no quarter to critical relativity, grant enormous variety to the specific arts. For it must be remembered that prejudice is not dogma, that the one has no toleration of the other. If prejudice were dogma, the *New York Times Book Review* would be a first-rate critical organ. It allows the narrowest possible range of artistic performance along with the widest latitude of incoherent opinion—simply because it uses, instead of principle, prejudice.

To deny the use of the critical quarterly today is to deny the use of criticism. It is a perilous denial. For criticism is not merely a way of saying that one poem is better than another; it gives meaning to the awareness of difference only in so far as it instructs the reader in three fundamentals of mounting importance: the exercise of taste, standards of intellectual judgment (differing from taste in being more conscious), and self-knowledge. If the reader is not encouraged in self-knowledge—a kind of knowing that entails insight into one's relation to a moral and social order that one has begun, after great labor, to understand—then taste and judgment have no center, and are mere words.

If this is the task of criticism, and if the task of criticism can be ccomplished only in the quarterly, what is to prevent its being carried ut? There are obstacles. To distinguish cause and effect is neither easy nor, ortunately, obligatory: living evidence of the divorce of fact and under-tanding, of action and intelligence, is the mass-produced monthly. It is kind of journalism that includes both the Hearst magazines and the quality" group. The Hearst readers have always existed potentially; the quality" readers number in their ranks many new recruits, but quite as nany must surely be persons with an education that formerly qualified hem to read the critical quarterly. Such readers have a certain sensibility, ut they are not actively critical themselves, and they take what comes; nd the monthly magazine, being efficiently because profitably distributed, s what they take. The inference to be studied here, if the inference were ot already visible as fact, is that the quarterly must be heavily subsidized.

There is still another obstacle to successful quarterly publication: he contributors. Or perhaps the obstacle is the effect of the monthly maga-ine on writers who might, but for its existence, be constantly available to he quarterly editor. The quality group, for example, can pay better rates or manuscripts than the most flourishing quarterly can ever pay. The nonthly can command first choice of the work of writers who would other-vise put their best effort into the more considered, and to them more satis-actory, performance demanded by the more critical journal. If the quar-erly pay five dollars a page, critics trying to set forth a program, and "creative" writers who wish to exhibit their work in terms of the coherent standards of those critics, will accept the five dollars a page—provided the ure of a bigger price does not meanwhile keep them from doing their better nd more serious work. The menacing possibility of eight or ten dollars a page is, by writers of all sorts, gratefully embraced. The writer is offering a commodity for sale, and he, like every other producer, must get the high-st price.

It is a law of "capitalism." There is no moral theory that can place a stigma upon this procedure. If it were possible for good writers deliberately o lower their quality, that would be a horse of another color; but the eveling comes from the market itself, which asks for a superficial, frag-mentary performance that may, within the assigned limits, be excellent

work. In the long run it is futile work, because it cannot be systematic and comprehensive. The writer, if he happen to be a critic, must begin his program over again with every essay, and journalize his thought out of existence: he cannot develop continuity of thought because he cannot count upon the attention of the same readers over a number of years: he is selling on the open market, and he cannot be sure that his product will be bought by the same *entrepreneur* a second time. He fidgets in this insecure, chaotic position because he must—or starve—seek the highest money reward for his work.

If the quarterly shall be less fragmentary than the monthly, it must maintain a policy that not only demands the leisured, considered performance; it has got to make the performance possible to its contributors. I suggest that the quarterly pay the highest rate it can—cheapening perhaps the quality of its paper and printing—but not that it try to compete in prices with the monthly. There is, I think, a compromise. And the compromise, a concession to the writer and an eventual benefit to the editor, consists in breaking the law of capitalism already referred to. One article of this law grows out of the merely cash nexus between the producer and the distributor—between writer and editor—and it urges the distributor to be as disloyal as possible—for a purpose—to the producer of the commodity which he sells. The distributor's purpose is to keep the producer insecure and humble, so that, should the strain of competition permit, he can give the producer the lowest possible price. For here it may be said that the monthly pays a better price than the quarterly, not because it is by good luck more prosperous and by nature more generous, but because competition forces it to pay ten dollars a page for work that might go to another editor for nine.

The quarterly must be loyal to its contributors in two indispensable ways, and both these ways involve another kind of nexus between writer and editor than the cash. A genuine critical objective cannot be attained if the editor waits on the market for what may arrive in the mail. If he has a mind, he must make up his mind what he wants, and decide that there are certain contributors whom he would rather have than others. There will be perhaps a dozen of these and the editor has got to be loyal to them. If he is a second-rate man, and fears that, by giving rein over a long stretch

to a talented group of men, he will be personally overshadowed, he had better write the entire contents of his magazine—a feat that, being a second-rate man, he will not be equal to.

Whether he be first- or second-rate, his first proof of loyalty is the highest price that he can pay. If the editor wants to enlist a regular staff of contributors whom he can call upon at a moment's notice, he should pay them a little more than he will pay for the casual manuscript, however good, that he found on his desk this morning. Authors are as responsive to kind treatment as other labor. They will feel for this editor a corresponding loyalty. They will let him have for five dollars a page, for instance, a manuscript that, after a little blood-letting, they might easily sell for ten to a quality magazine. They will do this all the more eagerly if the editor is willing to let the writer continue the work in three or four more essays, or stories, or poems; if, in short, the writers are encouraged in their programs.

That, in fact, is the editor's second loyalty—to take most of the output of his selected, inner circle of contributors. He must assume, if he does not actually know, that his contributors are not men of independent income. He must take a responsible view of their welfare. If he does not, the lure of high prices will attract their work into the open market. If the quarterly editor's attitude is indistinguishable from that of the commercial magazine, he is doomed to fail.

For, let his literary standards be the highest, his relation to his contributors is still commercial, even if he is not trying "to make money." He is only a less effective part of a system that the writer cannot afford to be loyal to. Both the serious writer and the critical quarterly are thus defeated. I could name a dozen leading writers, north and south, who remember the quarterlies for manuscripts that they cannot sell elsewhere at high prices. The quarterly review gets what is left in the trunk.

There is no use blinking these facts. It is futile to discuss the higher aims of the critical review without facing them. There is, of course, a very small group of writers—the present writer is doubtless one of them—whose aims are confined to the limited audience of the critical review. It is not an exalted purpose that so confines them; it is only the accident of concentration. If the quarterly editor's attitude is the same as his com-

mercial colleague's, the performance of the limited minority is not more effective than the scattered performance of the genial tribe seeking the open market. The minority suffers the restriction of audience without enjoying the satisfaction of taking part in a literature, and without getting the higher rates of competition.

Given the right relation between the editor and his contributors, what work may they together be expected to do? The question is rhetorical; but I think it is clear that nothing useful can be done without that right relation. Modern experiments in quarterly publication achieve moderate success; they win readers, a very few, year after year. The best quarterlies indirectly affect the quality reader, for the quality writer is often formed by the quarterly that his public never sees. But the quarterly that would justify the name of criticism must have a set purpose—not merely to publish the "best" that drifts into its office; its internal organization and its outward policy must be sharply defined.

The great magazines have been edited by autocrats. Within the memory of our time the great editors were Henley and Ford; in our own age, the late A. R. Orage and T. S. Eliot. Ford Madox Ford had notable success with *The English Review,* as early as 1909, because he knew what men to bring to the front: he gave concentration of purpose, the conviction of being part of a literature, to at least half of the distinguished writers who survived the War and who have deeply influenced our own age. He, more than any other modern editor, enrolled his contributors in the profession of letters—in a time when, under finance-capitalism, editors had already become employers who felt as little responsibility to their labor as manufacturers are able to feel towards theirs.

The Criterion under T. S. Eliot has been the best quarterly of our time. It has become the fashion to deride it: its intellectualism, its traditionalism, its devotion to "lost causes," expose it to an attack that for my purpose here is irrelevant. The value of its critical program does not concern me at the moment. It has been important because it does have a critical program: the editor from the beginning set out to develop critical issues. For a brief period, around 1926 or 1927, *The Criterion* became a monthly; it soon reverted to quarterly appearance. In the reduced size of the monthly the editor could not print contributions long enough to carry considered critical discussion.

If the task of the quarterly is to impose an intelligible order upon a cattering experience that the monthly and the weekly may hope only to eport, the task of the editor must be one of difficulty and responsibility. Ve must expect him to have power and influence. His power should be oncentrated if—it is worth repeating again—he is not merely to do what he monthly can do better. There can be little doubt that the success of *The Criterion*—it has never, I believe, had more than two thousand subscribers—has been due to concentrated editorship functioning through a mall group of regular contributors. By group I do not mean the personal riends of the editor, or persons enlisted in some movement, for a movement is not always a program. By group I mean a number of writers who agree hat certain fundamental issues exist and who consent, under direction of he editor, to discuss them with a certain emphasis. The editor may not elieve in Marxism, but he will see it as an issue, and he will seek discussion f Marxism from a point of view. The editor may decide that Thomson's *Seasons* is the kind of poetry that should be written today, and he will proeed to have poetry discussed in terms of mid-eighteenth-century poetical every.

I have alluded to the high aims of the critical quarterly as if financial acking were not a problem; as if the editor were at liberty to develop his rogram unhampered by the need of cash subscribers; as if his magazine ere free to find whatever public may exist for it. All writing seeks an udience. But the editor has a responsibility that he must discharge as erfectly as the contingencies of backing and public will permit. He owes is first duty to his critical principles, his sense of the moral and intellectual rder upon which society ought to rest, whether or not society at the oment has an interest in such an order or is even aware of its need for t. For the ideal task of the critical quarterly is not to give the public what t wants, or what it thinks it wants, but what—through the medium of its ost intelligent members—it ought to have. At a time when action has ecome singularly devoid of intelligence, there could not be a "cause" more lisinterested. The way to give the public what it resentfully needs is to liscredit the inferior ideas of the age by exposing them to the superior deas.

LITTLE MAN, WHAT NOW?

Rupert B. Vance

It is but token of our unhappy times that, entirely apart from his purposes, Herbert Agar's title, *Land of the Free* (New York: Houghton-Mifflin. $3.50), has an ironic ring. The ironic ring is still there when you lay the book down. For Mr. Agar has raised questions he has not answered —likely cannot answer. The task he sets before us is to give dignity and content to the terms—and the practice of—economic freedom, democracy, and private enterprise by restoring real property to every citizen. He has not shown how it can be done. The more desirable he makes his solution (and here the book achieves success), the more apparent becomes the fact that on his terms he cannot implement the transition. He is most convincing in his destructive analysis; he is not convincing at all in his constructive proposals. If Mr. Agar is right, we are done for. And for one who is sympathetic with the ideal he advocates, this is a hard thing to feel—and to say. This is a matter to which we can return only after we have explored Mr. Agar's viewpoint.

Undoubtedly the most fascinating part of the book is its excursions into comparative folkways, manners, national and esthetic ideals. His years abroad have given a freshness and a point of view to Mr. Agar's observations of his countrymen going Hollywood, talking New Yorkese, and living Midwestern or Southern style. Here he advocates an indigenous culture as contrasted with colonial imitation and metropolitan glitter. Mr. Agar agrees that citizens stripped of their freedom and economic security

can never produce an art or enjoy a culture that is anything but mean and ignoble. "Today," he writes, "it is no longer fashionable to cry, but our sophisticated authors aim at a gloomy indifference, a proud refusal to let life break them down, which suggests a red Indian at the stake." In its economics and its esthetics the treatment falls in line with that associated with the English distributists and the Southern agrarians. Resisting temptation to follow these leads, this review takes the book on its own basis as economics and high politics. This, it must be pointed out to the reader, is not the economics of the schools. It breaks into literature, art, or morals as the author desires.

What Mr. Agar proposes to give us is a convincing alternative to the now familiar dilemma of communism or fascism. He writes:

> We are continually being told that there are just two ways out. Either we must maximize profits, savings, and investments by a policy of low wages and diminished social services, which is fascism; or we must escape from the dilemma of finance capitalism by abandoning the profit motive and establishing production for use, which is communism. This ignores the original American system which was the creation of actual private property.

Mr. Agar is, I take it, an honest conservative and a sincere democrat, but he has decided that in our times neither is enough. There is, he recognizes, perhaps no more corrosive moral force in modern society than fear of the rise of proletarianism and social revolution. When this irreconcilable issue becomes dominant, men throw tolerance, liberalism, and intellectual honesty to the winds and begin to "think with their blood." Here Mr. Agar's indignations do him credit. He has less patience to spare for the conservative apologists who speak as though our Jeffersonian ideals are achieved when we give free rein to business enterprise, than for the Marxists, to whom, interestingly enough, he allows some measure of idealism. As for the first, it is they, if anybody, who are responsible for giving "our citizens the feeling that to defend American institutions means to insult the brains of suffering men and women, to be a conservative means to be a braying jackass."

Where capitalism means a real system of private property, so the thesis runs, capitalism means democracy and freedom; where capitalism

means a nation of wage-earners and the control of real property by high finance, capitalism must end in the tyrant state. Political democracy without economic democracy is a snare and a delusion, and economic democracy can come only with the return of the "little man." The little man owns a small business or a self-sufficing farm, and a nation of little men would compose the property state. Real property must take the place of paper and corporate property, and unlimited corporate enterprise must give way to limited small owners, each working for himself. His doctrine may be summed up in the words of the encyclical of Leo XIII which he quotes with approval: "The law should favor ownership and its policy should be to induce as many people as possible to become owners."

This proposal is phrased in the familiar pattern of Jefferson versus Hamilton and belongs within the framework of our history. But when Mr. Agar seeks a contemporary model he is compelled to point us to France and Denmark. And this, alas, is not so simple. For though France is not all she might be, her peasant proprietorships were won from church and feudal lords as the most permanent economic result of a bloody revolution. And Denmark is a coöperative agricultural community in which farmers, favorably situated in regard to export trade with England, control the state and its economic power. How this came about and how it functions, is a story which Mr. Agar does not tell.

The American dream, then, is the property state, a nation of small owners, small shopkeepers, small farmers. We have given private property away for private enterprise, a procedure which means corporate property and finance capitalism, with speculative wealth for the very few and insecurity and misery for the many. But the many have been told that wealth lies ahead, that there is room at the top, and that our private enterprise furnishes the world's highest standard of living. But suppose we allow Mr. Agar to deliver the charge to the jury:

> We have been told that the American dream shows an unprogressive mind and that if we only sell our birthright, we can all grow rich. I have tried to suggest that this is a lie. We have been told that the American dream presupposed a nation of hayseeds and that only in the giant cities of finance-capitalism are the most worth-while people found. I have tried to suggest that this is a lie. We have been told

that the American dream is doomed by economic law and that the whole western world must drift toward Hitler or toward Marx. I have tried to suggest that this, too, is a lie. We have even been told that the American dream has come true in modern America; that what we see about us is a fairer world than our fathers planned with certain improvements which they could not foresee. I have tried to suggest that this is the biggest lie of all.

Mr. Agar rejects all hopes of a high-wage industrialism. When he rejects its actuality on the basis of figures showing how little the masses retain from the productive process, we can but agree. At the same time we notice that he cites no figures to substantiate the assumed higher standards in countries of small owners. Mr. Agar rejects the possibility of high-wage capitalism in the future on the basis of the conservative Hayek-Robbins theory of the business cycle. This theory, in brief, contends that consumer incomes must of necessity always remain low to allow for reinvestment in producer's goods. Moreover, to avoid disaster, capitalism must finance its new enterprises out of savings, not out of hopes, not out of credit. Without going into any analysis here, one might say that the business cycle theory is still in the condition where one pays his money and takes his choice. Just as Mr. Agar on one side does not accept the various charts of plenty, it appears that the Hayek-Robbins theory, on the other side, may be turned against him. The small owner, it can be contended, may never lead a life of independence and high culture because of the incessant need to replace his store of producer's goods. And suppose, for example, our small owner-producer has to buy his tools or agricultural implements from a monopoly steel producer receiving monopoly prices behind a tariff wall.

If Mr. Agar is tired of being told that we can't turn back the clock, he has to explain why Jefferson failed when the clock and the votes were with him. For Jefferson had a grasp of the American dream that even today compels men's minds to admiration—and to lip service. Jefferson had his chance and did—exactly nothing. Jefferson, explains Mr. Agar, was a "muddled administrator, a weak fighter in the world of economic forces." But in the main Jefferson lost because of his own principle that a government should be as inactive as possible. "This," says Mr. Agar, "was a poor principle with which to fight the most dynamic forces in the western

world." But Mr. Agar comes after those forces have won on every front and he shares Jefferson's infirmity. He does not wish to invoke the power of the state; collective control and planning are foreign to his ideas. How then does he propose to begin? It is difficult to believe then that the real choice is, as Mr. Agar suggests, between saving small property or declining into the planned and regimented state. Small property is not at hand to be saved. It has been absorbed; it will have to be restored or rather created; and to do this will require more regimentation by the state than we have yet visualized in this country.

But this is not fair to Mr. Agar, for he has made it plain that he is not a Jeffersonian. Rather he follows the Adamses. John Adams realized that large property, small property, and no property had crept into the American scene. He wished to hold large property in check, disfranchise no property, and cherish small property, which he trusted to protect the public interest. If the unpropertied were denied the vote, John Quincy Adams hoped to open the West to real settlement rather than to speculation, and from the proceeds develop a system of universal education. This, Mr. Agar feels, is the most that could have been salvaged from the American dream of Adams' day. What can be salvaged today?

We have said that Mr. Agar is unable to implement the transition to a system of small ownership. He fails to tell us how Jefferson could have conserved small property; he fails to tell us how we can restore it today. Mr. Agar decries state tyranny, he hates planning, he is not willing to borrow, and while he faintly praises violence as practiced in the South he does not advise anyone to use it. While he follows the Adamses in believing that men without property should rightly be men without votes, he does not advocate disfranchisement of that grant today. I know of no contemporary advocate who has given so many weapons over to his enemies; retained so few for his cause.

He has left, if I read him right, savings and the appeal to the moral urge, and a measure of socialism for the large, basic industries. I should say "possibly savings," because he specifically warns against the danger that we may take his proposals seriously enough to authorize the huge bond issues that would enable large masses to become farm owners or to set up in small businesses. Now I am perfectly sure that he does not

expect Arkansas share croppers to save up the money necessary to buy out their landlords, and elsewhere he approves Professor Owsley's plans for setting up tenants as small landowners.

We have left the moral urge. Just how much of an impression this is to make on the prevailing pattern of economic power, social prestige, and legal rights, I cannot say. Mr. Agar's book is calculated to do something toward breaking down the social prestige of finance capitalism, but he, no doubt, realizes that economic power will remain as it now is until the very day "small property is restored."

From the viewpoint of legal rights we may well contend that America is the last country in the world to be selected in which to create small property or socialize large property. Under the dual sovereignty of the American constitutional system, the people acting through their legislative bodies have little control over business. The Fifth Amendment provides that the Federal Government shall not deprive any person of property without due process of law; the Fourteenth places the same restriction on state governments. Mr. Agar speaks of the machinations of Alexander Hamilton or John Marshall and regrets that the corporation ever came to be defined as a legal person. When he confronts a *fait accompli* with the sentence, "A state that does not take a moral stand for fear its rich might disapprove is a state that will not survive," we may feel that he is guilty of fearful prophecy. But we all realize that, given our constitutional system, the phrase "the rich might disapprove" is a classic of understatement. I commend to Mr. Agar's attention the progress through the courts of the recent utilities holding company bill.

The hope of abolishing all our class antagonisms by elevating the lower classes into middle classes is illusion, not reality. As soon as he turns from agriculture to the juggernaut of modern industry, Mr. Agar admits there exists only a limited field available for the restoration of small property. He does not share Senator Borah's pathetic faith in the efficacy of the Sherman Anti-Trust Law, and admits that for a time to come devolution in size must not be demanded in industries where it is inefficient and uneconomic. While the public utilities, like railroad and power, may receive some measure of socialization, the mass production industries, like steel, oil, and motors, it appears, are to be left much as they are. His hopes for

small property are pinned on such fields as the food industries, textiles, bakeries, and the small independent merchants.

Here Mr. Agar leaves us with a house divided against itself, half monopolistic and half competitive, half finance capitalism and half small property. Mr. Agar's goal is achieved if a majority come to hold real property. This may have satisfied the Adamses' demands; does it fit with conditions today? Since he has few good words to say for government intervention, he is not disposed to endorse either regulation of large business or control of small producers after the manner of AAA. And while he indicates that some measure of socialism may be necessary in the large, basic industries, his heart is not in it. If small owners are to be left to their own devices to pile up production as they please, while large scale industries gear production to a market price, Mr. Agar has to tell us how his small farmer and shopkeeper are to fare as consumers. And if this sounds like our present plight, Mr. Agar has to tell us how the scheme he proposes would be any improvement.

Mr. Agar pictures Jefferson as a muddled administrator and weak fighter against dynamic economic forces. To me this describes our bewildered small owner trying to manage his little business so as to extract from his uncontrolled selling prices sufficient income to replace his producer's goods and maintain a high standard of living. To get the force of this, we need to compare, since the onset of the depression, the fall of agricultural prices with the stability in the price of agricultural implements. Yet for all one may gather, Mr. Agar proposes to grant the manufacturer his high tariff, and relieve him from the necessity of making—or keeping—the promise of high wages.

Let us look at this matter from the point of view of economic power and pressure politics. In spite of his aversion to planning, suppose in imagination we ask Mr. Agar to plan our destiny. He will avoid the regimenting state and the interfering bureaucrats because they strike at freedom. He cannot for the time touch the large monopolies, for he does not share the pathetic faith in trust-busting. Now in return, finance capitalism will allow Mr. Agar to establish his subsistence farms and his small shops, for he proposes no large bond issues and no high taxation. There is little or no profit in these things and no temptation for finance capitalism to enter the

field. They then will decentralize discontent, while, meantime, the small owners can be trusted to have the bourgeois mentality, if they never secure the fleshpots. Poverty then will be decentralized, the promises of high wages will not have to be made or kept, tariffs will be retained, relief and social services curtailed. We have left a tax against bigness which may break up chain stores, but with government intervention curtailed. This may not be fascism, but Alexander Hamilton today would not be averse to such a condition of affairs. It differs from Hamilton's hopes only by Mr. Agar's insistence that industry be financed by savings and hard money rather than by bank credit and bond issues. He does not say so, but it may be that he hopes the little man, like the French peasant, will bring forth hard-saved money from his sock, and come to own the stocks and bonds of the new America. Is that possible?

Yesterday Mr. Agar's cause was the cause, among others, of small tobacco factories, iron forges, oil producers, and coal mines. Today these groups are gone; lost in the trend toward concentration in industry, mining, and fiscal control. Recurring depressions, as he points out, lead to further concentration by a process of shaking down, a process in which, according to Lewis Corey, one sixth of America's middle class has disappeared since the onset of the depression.

The modern economic order is of necessity a continually changing compromise of conflicting interests in which the state must act as final arbiter. Rapidly losing its proportionate hegemony, small property, it seems to me, is compelled to seek allies to maintain a balance of power. These allies are to be found in producers' associations, in consumers' interests, in the coöperative movement as well as in the rise of an aggressive labor movement. With this may come the more frequent intervention of the state to redress the economic balance of power. Short of violent revolution or complete collective control, there would appear to exist little foundation for the hope that the small property interest can ever again dominate. With worthy allies, however, this interest may retain something of its proportionate power in the constantly adjusting and readjusting equilibrium that is the social order.

THREE REVOLUTIONS IN POETRY

*III. Metaphysical Poetry and the Ivory Tower**

Cleanth Brooks, Jr.

In attempting a definition of metaphysical poetry, Dr. Johnson's famous phrase, "heterogeneous ideas yoked by violence together," cannot be lightly dismissed. He has seized upon the core of the method. It was a method, needless to say, of which he heartily disapproved—hence the "yoked by violence." But his criticism is relieved of much of its reprehension if we qualify it with Coleridge's statement that the imagination "reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities." Coleridge was prepared to believe that the uniting of the opposite and the discordant was one of the legitimate functions of the imagination, and further, that more than a mere yoking—that a reconciliation might be accomplished.

I. A. Richards has derived most of his critical theory—certainly the most important part of his critical theory—from Coleridge's famous passage on the imagination, of which the sentence quoted above is a part. His development of Coleridge's conception of the imagination as a synthetic (i. e., as a synthesizing) power has been neglected by other critics in their interest in his theories as to the use of poetry. This development is made in detail in his *Principles of Literary Criticism* in the all-important chapter, "The Imagination." Richards there distinguishes between two types of poetry: first, poetry which leaves out the opposite and discordant qualities of an experience, excluding them from the poem; and second, poetry in

* This is the last of a series of three articles on modern poetry—*The Editors.*

which the imagination includes them, resolving the apparent discords, and thus gaining a larger unity. He goes on to state:

> The structures of these two kinds of experiences are different, and the difference is not one of subject but of the relations *inter se* of the several impulses active in the experience. A poem of the first group is built out of sets of impulses which run parallel, which have the same direction. In a poem of the second group the most obvious feature is the extraordinary heterogeneity of the distinguishable impulses. But they are more than heterogeneous, they are opposed. They are such that in ordinary, non-poetic, non-imaginative experience, one or other set would be suppressed to give as it might appear freer development to the others.
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> The difference comes out clearly if we consider how comparatively unstable poems of the first kind are. They will not bear an ironical contemplation. We have only to read *The War Song of Dinas Vawr* in close conjunction with the *Coronach,* or to remember that unfortunate phrase 'Those lips, O slippery blisses!' from *Endymion,* while reading *Love's Philosophy,* to notice this. Irony in this sense consists in the bringing in of the opposite, the complementary impulses; that is why poetry which is exposed to it is not of the highest order, and why irony itself is so constantly a characteristic of poetry which is.

The distinction is not absolute, of course, but it seems to me a valid distinction, and more than that, a very fruitful one. Metaphysical poetry, as has already been pointed out, is the product of Coleridge's "synthetic imagination." Richards' description of poetry of synthesis may be used, therefore, to throw more light on the nature of metaphysical poetry. That the connection between the two is not a forced one may be demonstrated emphatically by comparing Richards' description with Eliot's comments on the School of Donne. The two critics are certainly far enough apart in general attitudes, sympathies, and terminologies. Their agreement is therefore all the more forceful.

Eliot has suggested the general nature of metaphysical poetry in pointing out some of the characteristics of seventeenth century wit: it appears in metaphysical poetry as "a tough reasonableness beneath the

slight lyric grace." It is characterized by "an alliance of levity and seriousness (by which the seriousness is intensified)." It is a function of the poet's ability to synthesize diverse materials. The poets who employed it possessed "a mechanism of sensibility which could devour any kind of experience."

These qualities, one observes, are just the qualities possessed by Richards' poetry of synthesis. Compare the "tough reasonableness" of Eliot's poetry of wit with the invulnerability to irony of Richards' poetry of synthesis; the "alliance of levity and seriousness" with Richards' unification of opposed impulses; Eliot's "sensibility which could devour any kind of experience" with Richards' statement that "Tragedy [the poetry of synthesis at its highest level, in his opinion] is perhaps the most general, all-accepting, all-ordering experience known. It can take anything into its organization." One may suggest one more definition of metaphysical poetry, a definition based on Richards' terms: it is a poetry in which the heterogeneity of the materials and the opposition of the impulses united is extreme. Or if one prefers to base himself directly on Coleridge: it is a poetry in which the poet attempts the reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities.

The metaphysical poet is a desperate poet; he has confidence in his own power—in the power of the imagination. He is an ambitious poet. He is constantly remaking his world by relating into an organic whole the amorphous and heterogeneous and contradictory. He is not content to call attention to likeness with like; he is not satisfied with feeble and colorless metaphor. As a desperate poet, as a poet who gambles on an all-or-nothing basis, he is capable of grievous error. (One must never forget, however, that the roads which lead to absurdity are many and various: if Crashaw's description of the Magdelene's eyes as "walking baths" is absurd, so is Wordsworth's "Idiot Boy.")

The principle on which the poet risks his gamble can be justified, however, and justified out of Dr. Johnson himself. In one of his finest passages, Johnson likens a successful comparison to the intersection of two lines, pointing out that the comparison is better in proportion as the lines converge from greater distances. The observation is a sound one, and will bear a little elaboration, even in the metaphysical manner. The metaphysical poet (though Johnson was not prepared to agree that Donne often

made the lines really intersect) converges his lines from the farthest possible distances. The parallelism of the lines—too close a resemblance between the objects compared, a matter which Johnson illustrated by Addison's angel simile—results in no true comparison at all, as Dr. Johnson rightly insists. Much of Hobbesian metaphor falls into this category, and like the ideal lovers in Marvell's splendid conceit, the lines "so truly parallel/ Though infinite, can never meet."

In proportion as we prize poetry as *poetry,* not as doctrine or science, we shall prefer the metaphysical method in which the lines of the comparison, derived from the farthest distances, are made to converge on a point.

It will be possible to connect the rise of metaphysical poetry in our day with the concomitant intensification of the dislike for sentimentality. The two phenomena are related, whether consciously so or not. For wit, the "tough reasonableness," the "invulnerability to irony," is incompatible with the sentimental. As Richards has pointed out, "Irony [in one sense at least] consists in the bringing in of the opposite, the complementary impulses." His poetry of exclusion is exposed to it, obviously because the poet in that case has *excluded* the complementary impulses from the poem; and the accidental introduction of the poem into a context where they occur means the destruction of the poem, for the poet has not in this case come to terms with these correlative aspects of the experience. The sentimental experience always has to be viewed in the "right" perspective—else it crumbles. Richards' poetry of synthesis, on the other hand, is impervious to irony for the very reason that it carries within its own structure the destructive elements—the poet has related his experience and reconciled it to them. We may go further and say that the poet has included enough of the context in his experience so that the poem can never be thrown, raw and naked, into a new context in which it may appear foolish and ridiculous. In other words, the poet has been just to the complexity of experience, and has not given us an abstraction in the guise of experience.

It will be easy to illustrate this general principle of metaphysical poetry from its conceits. Any comparison has in it an essential incongruity, even the most trite comparison. Eyes are not really very much like stars nor love like a red, red rose. The poet who is too scientific is apt to depend too much on the likeness between the objects which he compares. He

lets no recognition of these disparities appear in the poem. Consequently, the fault of most poetic metaphor is that it "wears out." On a first reading it may go very well. Closer acquaintance reveals the disparities, and a shift of the poem into an ironic context reveals them cruelly. The metaphysical conceit represents a complete reversal of this. The disparities are deliberately exploited by the poet; they are gathered up within the context of the poem. Since the destructive elements are contained within the comparison, the conceit, if unsuccessful, rather than wearing out, explodes from within. If it does not explode with a first reading, it is extremely durable. There are no further ludicrous disparities to be revealed on later readings. The metaphysical poet, with his constant awareness of incongruities and disparities does not run the risk of taking his poem for science. He does not deal in eternal likenesses and approximations. His unity is a perilous one, wrested by his own effort from a world of incongruities. He is never allowed to forget that he deals with fictions. That this is an important asset becomes apparent when we come to observe the general nature of poetic symbols, and the relation of the poem to truth.

For poetic symbols are not *true*—not even in the sense in which scientific symbols are. The statement that they are "true" is in itself a metaphor. We must seek further than the illustrative aspect of metaphor in order to determine adequately its function.

All this is directly applicable to the problem of propaganda art, for in insisting on art as propaganda, the Marxists have merely revived and restated the oldest and stubbornest heresy of criticism—the didactic theory. For them, the end of poetry is to instruct and convert. The truth of the poet's doctrine has, thus, everything to do with the value of his poetry, and the truth, needless to say, is Marxism.

The essential naïveté of this position has brought forth a number of able replies, but the strategy of the Marxists has been to discredit these rejoinders by claiming that their opponents use an out-of-date terminology. They are "unscientific," with all the odium which that term carries for most Americans. Their refusal to accept the Marxist view of literature forces them into the isolation of the Ivory Tower. Eliot's declared position as a royalist and as an Anglo-Catholic has particularly exposed him to such an attack.

In proposing a definition of metaphysical poetry, we have already made use of Richards' development of Coleridge's conception of the imagination. But Richards' position on this subject is directly related to the problem of doctrine and belief. And furthermore, since the Marxist tactics are to question their opponents' "unscientific" terms, Richards in this case may be especially useful. It will certainly be difficult to argue that he has wandered into his position without benefit of psychology.

In the first place, Richards would not accept the dichotomy upon which the Marxist position rests, that of propaganda art on the one hand and the Ivory Tower on the other. For him, a poem is not a more or less true statement in metrical garb, but an organization of experience, and it is in terms of what may be called its psychological structure—"the resolution, inter-animation, and balancing of impulses—that all the more valuable effects of poetry must be described." He has expressed this more simply and emphatically elsewhere in the statement that "It is never what a poem says that matters, but what it is."

T. S. Eliot has quoted this statement with approval. Even earlier he had in his *Dante* (though with careful qualifications) indicated that his theory of poetic belief is similar to that of Richards. In his *Use of Poetry* he advances his position a further stage. After stating that if literature exists at all, we must allow that "one may share the essential beliefs of Dante and yet enjoy Lucretius to the full," Eliot points out that Shelley's beliefs do get in the way of his enjoyment of Shelley's poetry. He accounts for the apparent inconsistency in this way: "I suggest that the position is somewhat as follows. When the doctrine, theory, belief, or 'view of life' presented in a poem is one which the mind of the reader can accept as coherent, mature, and founded on the facts of experience, it interposes no obstacle to the reader's enjoyment, whether it be one that he accept or deny, approve or deprecate. When it is one which the reader rejects as childish or feeble, it may, for a reader of well-developed mind, set up an almost complete check."

What Eliot has done, however, in making his point, is to shift the matter at issue from a consideration of the truth of the poem's doctrine to the poem's structure—from what the poem says to what it is. It is easy to throw his last development into Richards' terms. The poetry of synthesis

with its opposed impulses and its invulnerability to irony is obviously a poetry, the doctrine of which impresses the reader as being "coherent" and "mature." The phrase, "founded on the facts of experience"—however Richards might choose to restate it—clinches the matter. And it is this toughness and maturity which is salient in the poetry of the metaphysicals.

Richards, furthermore, makes explicit provision for Eliot's "complete check" in the following terms: "the question of belief or disbelief never arises when we are reading well. If unfortunately it does arise, either through the poet's fault or our own, we have for the moment ceased to be reading and have become astronomers, theologians, or moralists [and one may add "or economists"], persons engaged in a quite different type of activity."

It is the type of activity, I take it, which Tate scores in what he calls "Platonic poetry" in which "the will asserts a rhetorical proposition about the whole of life where the imagination is incapable of seizing that whole implicitly. If the lines [Life like a dome of many-colored glass/Stains the white radiance of eternity] were an integral part of a genuine poem, *the question of their specific merit as truth or falsehood would not arise* [*italics mine*]."

We may summarize the position on the question of poetic belief as follows: first, the scientific truth of the doctrine enunciated will not save the poem just as its scientific falsity will not damn it. The poet then must not place an illegitimate dependence in the possible scientific truth of his doctrine. As Tate puts it, the assertions made by the poet must be "a quality of the whole poem"—not "willfully asserted for the purpose of heightening a subject the poet has not implicitly imagined."

Second, the doctrine must be one which is suitable to a poem which is to stand up under "an ironical contemplation"; or in Eliot's terms it must impress one as mature; or to use Tate's, it must not "over-simplify the human predicament."

If the truth of the doctrine enunciated in a poem cannot in itself make the poem good, there are, in addition, special and positive risks which the propagandist-poet incurs. Because he is intent on the truth of his statement and preoccupied with the inculcation of a particular message, his poetry may easily take the structure of Richards' poetry of exclusion, leav-

g out of account the elements of experience not favorable to the matter hand, and thus over-simplifying experience. Richards' poetry of exclu-on, by the way, parallels closely Tate's Platonic poetry. Tate's reprehen-on of such poetry is perfectly just: it is an "over-simplification of life" hich is undertaken "in the face of the immense complication of life as whole." It is therefore related to science which indulges in a systematic ver-simplification, and it lacks the inner poise and stability, the constant lf-criticism of poetry of the highest type. (It is perhaps not necessary add that the over-simplification made by science is, for the purposes of ience, perfectly proper and legitimate.)

Here perhaps we have an answer for Horace Gregory's defense of ropaganda art in which he states that "Shelley's failures *are not traceable his use of propaganda.*" One could hardly choose a more apt case. The haracteristic fault of Shelley's poetry is that it excludes on principle all ut the primary impulses—that it cannot bear an ironical contemplation. Vhat Shelley's regenerated world of *Prometheus Unbound* really has to ar is not the possible resurrection of Jupiter but the introduction of an onic note. Grant that, and chaos comes again.

If one prefers modern examples, one may find them in abundance in ne recently published anthology, *Proletarian Literature*. The character-tic fault of the type of poetry exhibited is *sentimentality*. The term is sed advisedly. These poems demand a sympathetic audience upon which hey may rely for a sympathetic context. At their best they are, to use ichards' terms, "content with the full, ordered development of compara-ively special and limited experiences." At their worst, even the more bvious aspects of sentimentality appear. It requires no special definition f the term to convict the poems of Genevieve Taggard, Langston Hughes, nd others of just this vice. The experience established involves illegitimate xclusions and a special posing in a special light.

To take an extreme example, consider the following stanzas from Don Vest's "Southern Lullaby":

> Eat, little baby, eat well,
> A Bolshevik you'll be,
> And hate this bosses' hell—
> Sucking it in from me . . .

Hate, little baby, hate deep,
You mustn't know my fears,
Mother is watching your sleep,
But you don't see her tears.

Propaganda has apparently blinded the editors of the anthology in this instance, as well as the poet.

I suggest that the terminology used above is not unrelated to Kenneth Burke's recent warning to the American Writers' Congress against *propaganda by exclusion*. He would prefer to substitute for this, *propaganda by inclusion,* stating that "the imaginative writer seeks to propagandize his cause by surrounding it with as full a cultural texture as he can manage, thus thinking of propaganda not as an over-simplified, literal, explicit writing of lawyer's briefs, but as a process of broadly and generally associating his political alignment with cultural awareness in the large." The warning, on the basis of the poetry exhibited in *Proletarian Literature,* has not come any too early.

The error made by the Marxists is the error inherent in the very terms of the old didactic theory. The dilemma set up between propaganda art on the one hand and art for art's sake on the other is a false one, and ironically enough, it arises from a clumsy and inadequate account of poetry. Richards' comment that "underestimation of the importance of the arts is nearly always due to ignorance of the workings of the mind" seems to fit the case. However revolutionary its economics, the esthetic theory of the Marxists represents little advance over the Victorians with their "message-hunting" and their Browning Societies.

If metaphysical poetry is, as this essay maintains, "the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities" and the product of the synthetic imagination, and if it is true that the scientific spirit is antithetical to it, then the history of English literature will have to be rewritten. Obviously; for a change in the definition of poetry involves far more than an influence on the poets writing what happens to be at the time modern poetry. It has repercussions on all the poetry which has ever been written, since all poetry is ultimately to be measured against it. Our revaluation of metaphysical poetry is directly related, therefore, to a body of criticism.

Some of the revisions implied may be sketched in a brief summary.

bviously, the growth of the scientific spirit in the seventeenth century he influence of Hobbes on Cowley, D'Avenant, and Dryden, for example) as one of the important factors in the downfall of the School of Donne. s Ransom admirably puts it: "What Bacon with his disparagement of oetry had begun, in the cause of science and protestantism, Hobbes com- eted . . . The name [of Hobbes] stood for common sense and naturalism, id the monopoly of the scientific spirit over the mind."

What happened at this time may be described in the terms, again, I. A. Richards. The process of clarification and refinement involved the *clusion* of certain qualities: the unpoetic, the obscure, and the unrefined ere carefully pruned away. The imagination was weakened from a magical and synthetic" power (as Coleridge was later to phrase it) to obbes' conception of it as a sort of file-clerk of the memory. It was the agic that Hobbes was anxious to eliminate.

What occurred was no less than a major revolution in taste, a revo- tion ultimately more radical, as we shall see, than the better-publicized omantic Revolt. Before discussing that, however, one may point out at much of the poetry written in terms of this first revolution has the nitations of Richards' poetry of exclusion. Take Pope, for example, the pical poet of the "Age of Reason." His soundest element, his wit, is early always relegated to satire or *vers de société. (The Rape of the Lock* monumental *vers de société.)* Where his wit is lacking—"The Elegy on n Unfortunate Lady"—he is often the sentimentalist. And perhaps this as his essential character. One feels that he is often afraid of trying to ise the emotional intensity of his poetry, for fear of becoming the senti- entalist—or, as he would have put it, "the enthusiast." Such matters are ncealed by terms like the text book phrase, "the Age of Reason."

The second revolution, the Romantic Revolt, failed to be revolution- y enough. The poets, in attacking the eighteenth century conception of e "poetic," attempted to revise it instead of discarding altogether the nception of a special poetic material or a poetic diction. Even Coleridge imself, with all his critical acumen, did not completely free himself from e didactic conception. The didactic function, clad in irridescent colors s a revelation of the Divine, remained to confuse his critical theory. In ineteenth century literature, then, again an acceptance of metaphysical

poetry implies far-reaching revisions of the conventional estimates. Some of the characteristic defects of Shelley have already been touched upon. Other revisions, perhaps less drastic, are also involved.

In a sense, this last revolution, which we are witnessing, is more traditional than the two which preceded it. In the largest sense, it undertakes to repair the damage which ensued from the first—to return to the structure of Elizabethan poetry.

We need not be worried at failure to find in Elizabethan times a full and an explicit description of that poetry. The Elizabethan critics were content to repeat the didactic justifications of poetry which they had learned from the classics or from Renaissance Italy and France. It suffices that we have their poetry, in terms of which we may frame our description. For the poet, like Shakespeare or Donne, who did not fetter his imagination with external codes of taste, all material and all diction were potentially poetic. There were no criteria external to the poetry itself—no preliminary and arbitrary tests, of metre, or of seriousness, or of beauty, which the material had first to pass. The sole criterion was the ability of the matter in question to function organically in the poem. Out of this liberty comes the most complex, intense, tough-minded, and subtle poetry which we have. These are qualities worthy of being coveted; perhaps our moderns covet most of all the Elizabethan poet's *union* of them—his ability to achieve each one of these qualities without the sacrifice of the others.

This return to the structure of Elizabethan poetry can be illustrated from the work of the modern poets who have had most to do with defining that structure. There is no need—and no space—in this essay to attempt an elaborate and detailed illustration. The more obvious characteristics of metaphysical poetry, the conceits, the ironical and bathetical contrasts, the paradoxes, the abrupt transitions are all to be found in the poetry of Eliot, and Ransom, and Tate. What needs to be emphasized is this: the function of such devices as the instruments of a serious wit by which these poets do justice to the complexity of experience.

In Eliot's *Waste Land,* for instance, one of the major problems which the poet faces is to relate a sensitiveness of the present to an awareness of the past. *The Waste Land* has as its very groundplan, therefore, a balance and reconciliation of opposites. And as F. O. Mathiessen has

pointed out, these juxtapositions of past and present are over-simplified f they are interpreted merely as the pitting of a glorious past against a sordid present.

The basic structure may be revealed in the line as well as in the poem as a whole. Line after line, of Tate in particular, is characterized by a tension between opposites. The easy metaphor is constantly avoided n favor of the surprising one. The image—far from being allowed to dwindle into mere concept—is forced into concreteness. A vigorous play of thought exhibits itself in terms of vigorous images. For example:

> The singular screech-owl's tight
> Invisible lyric seeds the mind
> With the furious murmur of their chivalry.

In Ransom the metaphysical structure characteristically expresses itself as irony, but as a very complex irony. His poetry is deceptively light. Few poets display so brilliantly the function of irony in exploring, qualifying, and in general developing an attitude, charging it with intensity and at the same time legitimizing that intensity.

The work of all three of these poets may be described, in Eliot's terms, as an attempt to heal "the dissociation of sensibility" which occurred in the seventeenth century by uniting the play of the intellect with emotional intensity, levity with seriousness. Obviously, there are other poets who participate in this revolution. To mention only two, Hart Crane (though he never quite succeeded, one feels, in relating his theme to the texture of his verse) and Robert Penn Warren, whose poetry will beautifully illustrate the unification of sensibility. But it is perhaps more important here to *exclude* a group of poets who might seem to come under the terms here given.

With the importance attached to poetic diction in these essays, one may well ask why the Imagists' attack on poetic diction and the attacks delivered by poets like Carl Sandburg were not productive of more success. Certainly such attacks were moves in the right direction. But the assertion of the right to use any word or any material does not necessarily imply the poet's need to exercise that right or his successful exercise of it. In practice, these poets rarely used the "unpoetic" except for accuracy in visual description. Contrast and irony, when they employ them at all,

are usually displayed in their simplest terms. Their *images* are, often enough, sharp and vivid; rarely are they rich and complex *symbols* as well. And the symbols which seem deepest-rooted and most meaningful for these poets—like Lowell's "woman, sick for passion"—are poetic in the old sense and have little of the toughness and angularity of their more modern, incidental imagery. They produce figures that in an earlier day would have been recognized as conceits: for example, Amy Lowell's "My vigor is a new-minted penny." But they do not follow up the connections as a metaphysical poet would have done. These poets are a symptom of something wrong with traditional poetry and a partial corrective. But they did not think enough, and more important, they did not fuse thought and feeling intimately enough to accomplish the revolution in poetry which was needed.

It is important, however, to point to one other modern metaphysical poet, William Butler Yeats. One does no violence to the term in applying it to his later poetry. And to discover in his poetry a kinship with the metaphysicals is very good proof that metaphysical poetry is essentially a structure rather than a subject matter or a philosophy. Moreover, his later work raises for us the general question of the relation between Symbolist poetry and metaphysical.

In the best-known recent work on the Symbolists, *Axel's Castle,* Edmund Wilson has interpreted Symbolism as an anti-scientific movement. And so it is, but legitimately so. The implication, enforced by Wilson, that it is an ultra-romantic attempt to escape from life does not follow. If the propositions made in this essay about the relation of science to poetry are true, then it may be very well for the poet to order the scientist off the premises as a trespasser, and as an injurious one. The poet may or may not be attempting to escape from life; but the fact that he is consciously avoiding the methods and ends of the scientist does not in itself make him an escapist. In Yeats' later poetry, he has added to his subtlety a toughness and maturity which make him today perhaps the finest poet writing.

Yeats' symbols are after all, of course, nothing but concrete and meaningful images in terms of which the play of the mind may display itself—that play being, not rigidly conceptual and bare, but enriched with

l sorts of associations. Yeats' later poetry, like the poetry of Donne, veals the "mind at the finger-tips." It is surprising how much *reasoning* here is in this poetry, passionate reasoning of the order of Donne's. The requent paradoxes point to the same kinship, though many of the paraoxes are disguised for the ordinary reader in terms of symbols. For xample, Sato's sword may be taken as a symbol of physical force, the fe of action; the moon, as a symbol of the unclouded intellect. The two ntradict, Yeats says, and yet action is the condition of thinking. Conder these examples from *The Tower*:

> In Sato's house,
> Curved like new moon, moon luminous
> It [the sword] lay five hundred years.
> Yet if no change appears
> No moon . . .

nd from another poem

> . . . under the light of a moon
> That seems unlike itself, that seems unchangeable,
> A glittering sword out of the east.

nd blood (another symbol of physical action) and the moon are played ff against each other, not only in the poem of that title, but in fully half f the poems in *The Tower*.

Edmund Wilson has cited "On a Picture of a Black Centaur by dmond Dulac" as an especially clear example of the influence of the rench Symbolists upon Yeats. So it is, but it may be taken also as an specially clear example of metaphysical poetry.

The centaur symbolizes, obviously, the animal side of man as opposed o the intellectual side. The poet formerly, he tells us in the poem, did ot give the life of the body its due: "I knew that horse play, knew it for a murderous thing." Now, however, he recognizes his error.

The *horse play* is literally the play of the centaur—of the concrete, physical man. But *horse play* has very definite associations, as a phrase, with boisterous, rowdy, mischievous activity; and the poet consciously makes use of these. They make vivid his former conception of the physical; but they have a more significant function. They preserve the poet's realism. In coming to celebrate the body rather than to deprecate it, he does not

propose to strike an attitude. The black centaur with its classic and heroic associations is a fitting symbol for the physical, but the poet does not mean, by using this symbol, to romanticize it. He refuses to leave the boisterous and rowdy aspects out of account. "Horse play" and all, it is superior to intellectual abstractions. Moreover, the fact that the phrase has two different significances, and that it means them simultaneously—this verbal compression in itself prepares for the fusion of the two apparently opposed meanings into a larger and richer meaning.

The device amounts to the serious pun such as occurs in Donne or Shakespeare—an extreme instance of Richards' synthesis of opposed impulses.

Yeats has arrived at his present position by quite other routes than those taken by Eliot and others. (The influence of the French Symbolists, of course, he shares with Eliot.) But if it is true that misapplied science broke the course of metaphysical poetry, then an "anti-scientific" trend like Symbolism might very comprehensibly carry one back of Hobbes to the metaphysicals. This is perhaps the fundamental explanation of Yeats' preoccupation with magic, Rosicrucianism, and all those modes of thought which deal not with the scientific intellect but with the intellect expressing itself in relation to emotion through concrete and richly charged symbols.

Thomas Hardy, however, is our best test case. He had no conscious connection with the School of Donne. He attempted no radical reëstimates of the poetry of the past; for him, Shelley and Keats, apparently equally, were still "those matchless singers," though his virtues are of an almost entirely different order from theirs. But one may find even in his work the structure of metaphysical poetry.

To make this point adequately would require a much more elaborate treatment than can be given here. The suggestion need not be left hanging in air, however. There are a number of fairly obvious indications of his relation to the metaphysicals. His characteristic fault, for example, is their fault—the heterogeneous yoked together rather than united. In his poems, Victorian poetic diction, dialect words from Dorset, Latinisms, words coined by the poet himself, often jangle together. And what is true of the diction is true of other aspects of his poetry. But on occasion Hardy does manage to fuse his material into a unity which serves his ironical con-

templation of human circumstance. In his "ironies," satires of circumstance, and other such poems, Hardy, like the metaphysicals, makes frequent use of the paradox. One of his finest poems, "In Tenebris, I," is the grave, austere, solemn exploration of such a paradox: namely, that pain experienced is protection against pain:

> Tempests may scath;
> But love can not make smart
> Again this year his heart
> Who no heart hath.

But the successful blending of opposites is perhaps most clearly illustrated by "The Convergence of the Twain (*Lines on the loss of the Titanic*)." The great ship and the iceberg, in man's purposes so utterly dissociated, are actually meant for each other in the larger purposes of fate.

> And as the smart ship grew
> In stature, grace, and hue,
> In shadowy silent distance grew the Iceberg too.
>
> Alien they seemed to be:
> No mortal eye could see
> The intimate welding of their later history.

The structure of the whole poem with its ironical contrasts—

> Over the mirrors meant
> To glass the opulent
> The sea-worm crawls—grotesque, slimed, dumb, indifferent—

serves to corroborate the actual matter displayed in the poem. And the fable of the poem, the "intimate welding" of the ship and the iceberg into "one august event," is in itself a parable of the fusion, the welding of the opposed, which is the groundplan of the poem. Hardy is successful here, and the last line is true, not only for his fable, but for the internal structure of the poem. Consummation does come, and jars not only "two hemispheres," but the reader himself with the charm and surprise of great poetry.

WINTER TRYST

Mark Van Doren

When the Atlantic upsloped itself
Like roofs of higher and higher houses—
To the great ridge, the foaming shelf
Whereon no dolphin ever browses—

When the wild grey broke into white,
And ships rose endward, crushing mountains;
When it was thus, and icy light
Poured up from phosphorescent fountains—

When it was thus, at winter's crest,
A vessel arrived; and the annual ocean,
Faithfully setting her down in the west,
Repented awhile of its furious motion;

Subsided; but only until that prow
Was pointed again, and a passenger, waving,
Wept in the channel, reminded now
Of eleven months, and the duty of braving

A spring and a summer, and longer fall
Till the month of the year that was set for returning;

Then the grey slopes; and the port, and the tall
Still lover—O, time! O bitter adjourning!

When the Atlantic upheaved its whole
And the bottomless world dared keels to try it—
Then was the season; this poor soul
Only that month kept longing quiet.

Only that month—most difficult,
Most dark. Most loveless, and most unable.
Yet it was hers. And time's result
Is love's most fair, most speechless fable.

SIN OF OMISSION

He will remember this; the cunning Fates,
Seeing all seventy years laid flat ahead—
The spring-tight coil of days unrolls for them,
Their little and deep long eyes forewatch the dead—
The mouse-eyed Fates can number the known times
He will remember this, the thing unsaid.

Only to say it now would soothe that man,
His father, come to sound him in his room;
Most friendly, but the stairs are still acreak,
And the boy, deafened to another doom,

Says nothing; he is guilty of desire
For the mind's silence, waiting to resume.

What it was filled with, he the least of all
In a far day will know; remembering then—
So the Fates reckon—how he ran and called,
Hoping to bring the shoulders up again;
But only called half-loudly in his pride,
And in the pride of him the best of men.

He will remember this, and loathe the hour
When his fair tongue, malingering, stood still.
He will rehearse the sentences not said;
Pretending that he climbed the lonely hill;
Pretending that he met him at the top,
Articulate, and cured him of his ill—

His need to know, so innocent, how sons
Read in their rooms the dark, the dear-bought books;
How in his own good flesh the strange thing grew,
Thought's inward river, nourishing deep nooks,
Dyeing them different-green. The boy will feign,
Concealing his long sighs, his backward looks—

Will fabricate warm deeds and laughing words,
His hand upon a chair, his cheeks alive;
Instead of this cool waiting, and this gloom
Wherein no starting syllable can thrive.
He will remember even as he runs.
The Fates run too, and rapider arrive.

THE BUNDLE

He was too tightly bound—
The faggots pressed like one together—
For the bright wire to be unwound
And he be loosened to the weather.

There was a kind of day—
The air almost dissolving bones—
When he could wish the knot away,
And he distributed like stones—

Keeping their hardness still,
So they be scattered soft apart;
Space between them like a hill,
And time discovering his heart.

There was a kind of eye—
His children's, tethered at the rim—
Oh, he could even wish to die
If death could make them free of him.

Oh, he could be dispersed,
And the lean sticks grow fat with ease.
But he was fearful of the worst—
And panic then was his disease—

Lest the first break be last:
The wire a serpent in the air;
Fragments of him flying past;
Then all at once a nothing there.

Many the milder ways—
He scoured the world and counted, so;
But not for him the vagrant gaze
And the light-minded letting go.

Not for him the field—
Though he could watch across the wall—
Where the bones danced, and children wheeled,
And songs ascended at nightfall.

TWO OF YOU

I KNOW YOU after sixty years;
They have not changed, she said—
Those incombustible black stones
High in your ashen head;
Those coals that, as our passion blew,
Outlasted my poor dread.

Those eyes that I so lowly feared
For their unstopping gaze—
I may not fancy even now

That on my snow it stays;
This level whiteness of my life;
These warm, forgotten ways.

I have come back to look at you,
I have come back to find
The incorruptible straight stalk,
The rod within the rind.
And I can wonder if time erred,
Proving so rigid-kind.

He has made two of you, I say.
Does either of them hear?
That dark one rising inwardly?
This other one—this sere,
This whiter one that snows have singed,
Piling the faggot year?

But not the first, the ageless man—
I see him where he stands,
Stiff prisoner inside the glass,
Contented with smooth hands;
Condemned, erect, and total-deaf
To the sweet run of sands.

From the swift song of change, my love,
You long ago were locked;
A young man in an old man's hide,
And both of them are mocked;
Unless you listened, one of you,
When my crisp knuckles knocked.

PRIVATE WORSHIP

She lay there in the stone folds of his life
Like a blue flower in granite—this he knew;
And knew how now inextricably the petals
Clung to the rock; recessed beyond his hand-thrust;
More deeply in, past more forgotten windings
Than his rude tongue could utter, praising her.

He praised her with his eyes, beholding oddly
Not what another saw, but what she added—
Thinning today and shattering with a slow smile—
To the small flower within, to the saved secret.
She was not his to have—except that something,
Always like petals falling, entered him.

She was not his to keep—except the brightness,
Flowing from her, that lived in him like dew;
And the kind flesh he could remember touching,
And the unconscious lips, and both her eyes:
These lay in him like leaves—beyond the last turn
Breathing the rocky darkness till it bloomed.

It was not large, this chamber of the blue flower,
Nor could the scent escape; nor the least color
Ebb from that place and stain the outer stone.
Nothing upon his grey sides told the fable,

Nothing of love or lightness, nothing of song;
Nothing of her at all. Yet he could fancy—

Oh, he could feel where petals spread their softness,
Gathered from windfalls of her when she smiled;
Growing some days, he thought, as if to burst him —
Oh, he could see the split halves, and the torn flower
Fluttering in sudden sun; and see the great stain—
Oh, he could see what tears had done to stone.

IS THIS THE MAN

Is this the man who multiplied—
Divided, added—and was quick
As any wizard to subtract,
As any conjurer to trick
Love's innocent numbers, Love's eleven,
Love's unswift arithmetic?

Is this the man who hung the air
With spangled syllables all day?
And was indifferent if wind
Bore every word like webs away?
For there was more that he could spin;
Such love was infinite to say?

Is this the man who carried fire
And left a radiance all night—
Undid the shadows, and released
Some old incarcerated light?
Some moldy beam that lived and spread
And was to Love as second sight?

Is this the man? For it is dusk,
And he is standing dark and still.
For there is silence; not a sound
Weaves out of him against his will.
For he is awkward; he has lost
Even the memory of skill.

Even the memory of Love—
Oh, inarticulate, betrayed!
Oh, this the man for whom the world
Was honor-bright and cleanly made.
Yet here he stands, as darkly dumb
As Love's first guiltless renegade.

MILLENIUM

THE DREAM of this new man upon the earth
Was not of angels walking—their bright hair
Day-dusty, and their feet a little slowed,
Their litheness dimmed a little in dense air.

Nor was it of wild hunters, strayed away
From an interior forest—the gold hides
Sun-tarnished, and the flying leopard-tails
Wind-ravelled, and a shadow up their sides.

Nor men in rusty mail, nor passion-struck
Lean lovers, nor the tall ones in a grove,
Bare-shouldered, who dispute the evening down;
Nor saints in cells; nor loafers round the stove;

Nor farmers in the field; nor clever eyes
Pale-squinting into clefts of a machine.
The dream of this new man upon the earth
Was new of its own self. No brain had seen

What he saw when he scanned the coming day—
Square-headed then the heroes; high-oblong
The faces, and the ankles stiff with strength;
Heels hobbed; the insteps braided with a thong;

Caps eagle-beaked, and sooty overalls
Steam-blown as, pouring forth in swarthy pairs,
Their shoulders like Leviathan, their hands
Good humored, like the idle paws of bears

Down-hanging, thumb-and-fingerless, they strode,
One giant by the other, up the world.
And over them the angular steel tubes
Joined smoke to smoke, and jagged sparks were hurled;

And lines as straight as lightning led the way
To a foretold horizon, whither stamped,
Unending, file on file; and tireless sang
One song; and shook the mountains as they tramped.

OLD LANDSCAPE

There was some kind of safety in the feathery
Forest rising leftward from the lake—
The lake no more a mirror, and the shadows
Deepened in a frame of time, of dust,
Of slumber—there was safety in the ageless
Trees a hand once painted, plume by plume.

Across the tarnished waters, on a level
Waste, a blackened lawn, the castle towered,
Its windows morning-darkened, like an ogre's
Eyes that have been dreamless year on year;
Its moat no longer glittering, and the country
Carts all mired with time, the fetlocks fouled.

But there was safety leftward, by a faded
Bridge that in the foreground leapt the stream—
The stream no longer lustrous where the timbers
Fell on it like shadows—there his eye
Found comfort, and his feet imagined movement,
And he entered, and he mounted toward the grove.

And there was safety for him in the shaggy
Ceiling of dusk leaves, of lofty down
A brush had swiftly painted—thinking only
Of sloped masses, maybe; yet the hand

Might well have fancied feathers, and the under
Breast of what great nameless brooding bird.

So anyhow for him, who now in safety
Glided through the silence, and who heard
Soft beatings overhead as of a heartstroke
Muffled from the world, and from the carters
Struggling at the moat, and from the lake
Whose poisoned waters glittered under change.

THE LAST LOOK

THE GREAT eyes died around this room—
Died everywhere; no matter what wall's blankness,
He printed a pair of circles on it—filled
All four of them; surviving with a rankness

Terrible now to us, the livers-on—
The more so that we loved him for his quiet.
He was a man most delicate—not loud
Like this, like these round eyes; like this gaunt riot

Of spent, unsmiling gazes—for at the last,
Trying to smile farewell to us, he could not.
So it appeared that day, I mean. We now
Think otherwise. He looked at us and would not.

Why? But if we knew this, we had known
The other man, the man before the illness.
Now that he is a stranger—studying back,
We were unjust, loving him for his stillness.

That was the least of him—the great eyes prove it,
Lingering on these walls, and hanging fire
With the same truth we buried in the box—
Subdued then to the sermon and the choir,

Yet louder—for the concert here of walls
Is music's self, the sound of someone staring
Utterly, at all things, till they spoke.
This man alone was capable of sharing

Ultimate name and number. This is where—
Yes, this is where he lay, and where the ceiling
Said his last word for him; and where his eyes
Still wander past us, listening and feeling.

NEIGHBOR GIRL

You do not know me then, she said.
Well, it is what you asked.
I went away ten thousand miles,
And altered me, and masked.

Your son has never been so safe
As when I heard you cry:
Rather than he be country-wed,
Oh, I would see him die!

And has he lived, and has it gone
Forgetful-well with him?
And have you found another face,
And is my own so dim—

But listen! It is doubly gone.
I came to bring you word
How both of you are safe from me,
And if there be a third—

She too may smile and slip to bed
And never glance around;
I am so changed from what I was
I make no earthly sound;

I do not stare like that great girl
Who foddered her father's sheep.
I am more thin than thread—and look!
How listlessly I creep;

Yet not too slowly, going hence,
For if you laid a hand
Like this, like this upon me there,
You scarce would understand.

You do not know how far I've been,
Nor why this patch of white
Like frost upon my forehead grows.
Good father-in-law, goodnight.

ANIMAL-WORSHIP

Once on this ancient plain there fell the shade
Of a great loping hare who hid the sun;
Who darkened the high sky; and has not made
Another unearthly visit since that one.

Even that day is dead; no solemn eyes
Remain of those that watched him down the North;
Or those that feasted yearly, Indian wise,
On the small furless copies he sent forth—

The timorous rabbits, ancient on this plain,
Who now no more bring messages of cold:
Sons of the great mild hare whose dozing brain
At the world's upper edge grows dimly old.

In a sunk nest of snow he lies and dreams;
Down a grey depth he slumbers, long from here;
While the plowed plain forgets him, and the teams
Trample, and fatherless rabbits shake with fear.

No longer does their blood remember time,
No longer do they feel their far descent;
As the loud valley crows cry out and climb,
Sky-highward, where the one great raven went—

So long ago, so darkly through these hills,
That the last man is buried who was told;

That the last wing is mildewed, and the bills
Of once deep-knowing birds are green with mould.

So the loud western crow wings flap and lift,
And sagely now the beaks consider corn;
But none of them remembers here the swift
Vast body whence their images were born.

Past a blue mountain, westernmost of all,
He floats among the mist-pools, round and round;
And meeting the Hawk, floats on; no feathers fall;
For they go by, those gods, without a sound.

There is no beast or bird too delicate now
For man's vain understanding; no shod feet
Veer shyly from their pathways; no heads bow
Benignly when a man and serpent meet.

No creature upon four paws, in field or wood,
By rivers or by runways, stares and wins—
His muteness meaning wisdom, and his hood
Some heraldry of old where birth begins,

Where truth, where secret might, where sun and moon,
Where song and words of song, and what to pray;
There was a time when foxes set the tune;
And tigers; but it is another day.

It is the beasts' oblivion, when they run
Uncounted unto cover, when they shrink,
Denying their tall origin; when one
Trots lonely in the dew that he will drink;

When two by two they wander, with no word
Between them of the Hawk, the burrowed Hare;

The Raven, or the Bullock, or the herd
Of tempest-laughing Stallions, or the Bear.

One only of earth's animals is proud;
One only of its movers can be still.
Man only sits at rest and sees the crowd
File curving by, deflective to his will;

Sits on and sees, with nothing spread above,
No weird ancestral wing, no hovering mane;
Sits loftily, too certain of self-love
Ever to see a world upon the wane:

His world and theirs, the strangers whom he knows
Forgetfully—from their own selves disguised.
Man is time's fool, who withers the wild rose
Of that young day when gods were recognized.

A NOTE ON THE POETRY OF MARK VAN DOREN

Howard Baker

MARK VAN DOREN is a master of a special kind of modern poetry. His modernity is in general a matter of knowledge of, and understanding of, the world; specifically his modernity consists in seeing the world from the vantage points which the various divisions of anthropology have recently laid claim to. His most important poems—in the judgment of this reader—are psychological lyrics which trace out some portions of the obscure inner fabric of human beings, and which, in a way, are artistic counterparts to the formulations of certain modern psychologists.

Now it is a platitude that our age sees things from the angle of the scientists. Such is our heritage, for good or for evil. Consequently all writing and thinking, all poetry, is bound to be in touch with the laboratory and observatory. But to what ends scientific data are bent, to what large scheme of things science is made to serve—these are questions to which the platitude about a scientific age does not necessarily apply. The platitude has no meaning when it is applied to the ultimate effects of Mark Van Doren's most successful poems; for these poems are not different finally from the good poems of any age. But the content of these same poems is derived with unusual directness from the present. Indeed, Mark Van Doren, of living poets, is undoubtedly the one who is most representative of his nation and his times—this, if we may be permitted to flatter ourselves and our times so much.

And yet Mr. Van Doren's lyrics are a very special kind of modern

poetry. They are not modernistic: they are neither shaped in accordance with the present fads for novel surfaces nor marked by any imperious need for verbal experimentation. Thus they are not modern in a self-conscious and, consequently, a self-defeating way. They are remarkable, in view of the difficulty of their subjects, for their clarity and ease. They are reflective lyrics, not lyrical cries, not religious or social hymns. They are analytic in method; in this, more than in any other technical way, they betray their relationship to their times. And finally, their chief virtue and their great distinction is that they display a mastery of form.

This is a rather cumbersome list of assertions with which to begin a short essay. But because of the remarkable uniformity of Mark Van Doren's work it is possible to make certain general observations which will apply not only to the poems in this issue of *The Southern Review* but to his earlier books of verse as well. His first collection of lyrics, *Spring Thunder,* appeared in 1924; it was followed in 1926 and in 1928 by *7 P. M.* and *Now the Sky;* and last spring appeared *A Winter Diary,* a large volume containing both lyric and narrative poems. A narrative poem of book length, *Jonathan Gentry,* was published in 1931.

In these five books, as in our present group of poems, the supremely impressive accomplishment is, as we have said, a formal one. Form is as difficult to discuss as assertions about it are unwieldly. But since it is most relevant to Mark Van Doren's work and indeed to any discussion of modern poetry, we may be justified in plunging into a discussion of it. An element of form, I think, can be isolated more or less successfully by detaching a passage from a poem and examining it as writing. The following is the first stanza of "Return to Ritual," a magnificent poem which stands in the midst of some thirty magnificent poems in *A Winter Diary:*

> The mother of life indulges all our wandering
> Down the lone paths that narrow into peace.
> She knows too well the gradual discovery
> And the slow turning round until we cease—
> Resolved upon the wide road once again
> Whose dust hangs over day and mantles men.

Outside of form there seems to be little else in these lines. The quality and the scope of the perception are due solely to form: it is form which develops

he metaphor of the road of eternity; it is form which unites a peculiar rooding meter with words of resignation. And form, it seems to me, has evealed itself as boldly as it ever will in the amazing last line, "Whose ust hangs over day and mantles men." For these words say everything nd nothing—they are eloquent with awareness of mortality and they are levoid of rational content. They could never have come into existence vithout rhyme and meter and metaphor.

So it seems possible to say that form is fundamentally a way of per-eiving things. And it is a mistake to imagine that the thing perceived is orced to take an abstract shape; rather it is grasped and explored and iven a real life by form. For the form itself of a poem, if form is a way of erceiving things, is destroyed the moment that it is abstracted from the oem. To claim, then, that Mark Van Doren is a master of form is to claim hat he has the power of perceiving the world in that orderly way which s peculiar to poetry. He has, as instruments of perception, a range of subtly arious meters, a command of rhyme, and a dexterity with more uncommon levices, such as assonance.

What he has been perceiving in the world, from the appearance of his irst book until now, is indicated very well by the group of poems which is contained elsewhere in these pages. One will notice that here are poems about love, about the primitive, and about human characters. "Private Worship," for instance, is a metaphor, elaborated by the power of form, which fixes a deep and elusive aspect of love. The aim of the poem, quite obviously I think, is to teach the intelligence something of what love is. Thus the poem is analytic, thus it is psychological, and thus it stands related to the work of those philosophic psychologists who have lately bowed very low to Eros. Something similar could be said about "Is This the Man" and "Winter Tryst," except that these poems are complicated by interest in special characters and events.

The analytic trait in Mr. Van Doren's poetry seems to me to be very important. There is, for instance, a sonnet sequence in *A Winter Diary* which, though apparently conventional, lacks the romantic continuity of feeling which such sequences usually establish. Instead, it is a thing of brilliant and self-contained parts, each sonnet being in effect a pleasant analysis of one feature of love. There are no violent oppositions, passionate

contrasts and resolutions, either within the sonnets or among them. The traditional rhetoric remains, but it is used for unromantic analysis: Cupid has become, as it were, the Eros of psychology. This, after all, is a fitting employment of a way of writing which was originally artificial and inclined to double purposes. Somewhat similarly, in "Neighbor Girl" in the present group, the ancient ballad is transformed into a psychological lyric.

Mark Van Doren's interest in ancient verse patterns is probably related to his interest in the primitive. Certainly the two coincide in his numerous modifications of the old dream-vision technique. The objective of such interests must be a desire to seek out what might be called the archetypes of experience. This is one way, the psychological way, of reducing chaotic experience to order. In "Animal-Worship" we have at hand an example of what Mr. Van Doren does along these lines. The animals stand here as primordial images; man, since he has lost his power to recognize them as such, sits self-engrossed and myopic,

> too certain of self-love
> Ever to see a world upon the wane.

The value, then, of contemplating such formulations of the primitive is that they engender a non-personal, non-egoistic attitude towards the world. Religion has done the same thing for other generations; a vast social ideal may be doing the same thing for other people of our own generation. For the ways of arriving at an impersonal attitude are numerous; and actually Mark Van Doren achieves it most often, as in "Return to Ritual," from which we quoted, not through the primitive but rather through direct perception. The word *ritual,* however, demonstrates the affinity between that lyric and a poem like "Animal-Worship."

Similar to "Animal-Worship" in quality are several moderately long poems which stand at the beginning of the volume, *Now the Sky.* And these poems I dare say are the ancestors of the long narrative, *Jonathan Gentry.* All these pieces have an important point in common: they attribute an Eden-like peace and loveliness to the primitive. But the first part of *Jonathan Gentry,* which turns upon this vision of the primitive, and the last part seem to be noticeably unsuccessful. Here the primitive, when it is expanded into a governing principle for a way of life, becomes a love of land; and in the last part the man who loves the land is opposed by a wife

ho loves cities. Such a theme, though it has been exploited often in recent ears, is never anything other than an artificiality, an abstraction, a bit f romancing about America's pioneer history. For a way of life is a com- licated social phenomenon, and it can be grasped in terms of no simple ormula.

In other words, Mark Van Doren, although he handles lyrics with uperb power, is oppressed by a peculiar difficulty when he writes at length. he difficulty is inherent in the analytic method: analysis does beauti- ully with parts, but no part can be expanded, and the sum of the parts oes not equal a whole. Our times are oppressed by the same weakness, our ivilization is a thing of beautiful accomplishment in various departments f activity and a miserable thing in the whole. On the other hand, though ong poems put a fearful strain upon our limited modern powers, they can e written if they are grasped in their valid wholeness. This is proved, I hink, by what Mark Van Doren has done with the middle part of *Jonathan Gentry*. Here the Civil War is conceived with a unity of tragic insight, here is no easy formula, the complex attitude towards it is explored by the orm itself of the poem. And the writing is a remarkable achievement.

Another long poem, "A Winter Diary," is similarly limited by a lack f wholeness. The poem is about the pleasure of living in the country, but he significance of such a life is vague. One might even inquire, as a Marxist ritic would, how it is possible. And since the fundamental attitudes are nresolved, the incidents which the poem narrates remain disconnected, whimsical, homely, and somehow embarrassing. It seems that Mr. Van Doren's kind of poetry is more or less obliged to take an orderly physical world for granted. His tendency not to work out for himself a vision of rder but suddenly to catch sight of various modes of order fixed, as it were, upon the world, is shown I think by "Millenium" in the present group. t is a pity that we cannot take order for granted: if we could, Mark Van Doren's long poems would be better; if we could, we would be in a position eally to appreciate his lyrics. For after we have decided whether we shall ive in the country or city and how we can do either, then we should be able o devote ourselves to the more fundamental matters on which the lyrics re centered.

The absorption in the timeless archetypes of experience, whether they

are derived from the primitive or otherwise, gives rise to a paradox of which Mr. Van Doren is acutely aware. If one is engrossed in the timeless, then he misses purely human joys, and so he defeats himself. This is part of what is said in "Two of You"; one side of the man is deaf "to the sweet run of sands." So it is that attention to the impersonal, timeless, primordial whispering in one's blood is not always pleasant and wholesome. It is a fiercely inhuman passion on the part of the dying man in "The Last Look." It is an inhuman and regrettable inclination on the part of the boy in "Sin of Omission," and likewise on the part of many another boy in the poems of Mark Van Doren. The paradox is resolved by demanding, as Mr. Van Doren frequently does, that the human being succeed in becoming both highly personal and non-personal.

The pieces which study characters ordinarily weigh these two sides of the human being, one against the other. A character is grasped, is thoroughly understood, it seems, when the balance or lack of balance is discovered between the character's conventional mask on the one hand, and on the other hand his timeless, impersonal spiritual nature. The character in "The Bundle," for example, is dwarfed in that he lets himself become a bundle of conventions while he refuses himself other yearnings. The reader will notice that the characters in "The Last Look" and in "Two of You" are grasped in precisely this same way.

This and the foregoing notations on Mark Van Doren's work will be recognized as being more or less entangled in psychology. Since, in the preceding issue of *The Southern Review,* I mentioned psychology in connection with the poetry of Wallace Stevens, doubtless I should attempt certain distinctions lest I seem to use hocus-pocus. The two poets, of course, are nothing alike. Wallace Stevens, in *Harmonium* particularly, uses a large sweeping rhetoric which, as it moves along, gathers up the ancient mythical properties of the sun and moon and sea, of the ultimate features of the universe. Mark Van Doren looks closely and thoughtfully and penetratingly at the thing at hand; in fact, he looks so closely and penetratingly that sometimes his glance goes as far as Stevens'. And he has the advantage of giving forthright and serious concern to human characters; there are no characters in *Harmonium.* Each poet is important and good in his way. And, as for psychology, psychologists like Jung and Freud have made it

heir business to investigate the human being in his relation to the archetypes of experience. Poets have always had this business. When psychologists and poets appear in the same age, as they do now, their work must inevitably have some, and doubtless important, correspondences.

We have still to speak about the quality of Mark Van Doren's verse. Stylistically he is perhaps most closely related to Emerson and Emily Dickinson and E. A. Robinson, but he has been in touch with many other poets, noticeably those of the seventeenth century in England. If one detects in his work similarities to other poets, these are creditable; for it is folly to suppose that each poet must, or possibly can, invent his art totally afresh. If originality were valuable for its own sake, then the poet would have to re-invent his art for every poem; and actually the newest poet who would make for himself a striking reputation for originality is all too likely to need nothing more than a mannerism, which he will not be the least backward about repeating.

Mark Van Doren is for us a poet much as Robert Bridges was for the English. Both poets can be characterized by their mastery of their art, by their careful attention to tradition, by the integrity with which they have uttered the best that their ages knew. Mark Van Doren's ability as a poet can be demonstrated best by glancing at certain lines which contain a fundamentally commonplace idea. In the poem, "Now the Sky," he reflects on the difference between the ancient and modern knowledge of the stars, and his reflections are not basically different from those of any of us. But at the end of the poem he writes:

> The sky was then a room, with people going
> Faithfully to and fro, and beasts enchained.
> The sky was then a midnight wastrel, throwing
> Riches away; and still the purse remained.
>
> But now the sky is broken, door by door.
> Strangers in the room obscure the hosts.
> The meadow is not guarded any more
> By watchers coming lonely to their posts.
>
> The animals are never to be named
> That swarm beyond our company of old—

Stragglers from the herd, that we had tamed
Unknowing the recesses of the fold.

Those were no heroes whom we once addressed—
Hercules, Orion, and the Twins.
Unwounded, they were running from the rest
Far there where only now the war begins.

There is a game for players still to play,
Pretending that the board was never lost.
But still the painted counters will decay,
And knowledge sit alone to count the cost.

These stanzas, I think, bring together a depth of perceptions and words of perfect clarity and beauty. It is another sad vagary of our civilization that the influence of Mark Van Doren does not bulk heavier than it does and that his kind of poetry goes largely unappreciated.

AUTUMN OF POETRY

John Crowe Ransom

OLD POETS will always be having another say, and each time they will ay it little better, probably. If a little feebler, then a little mellower, like ıe tones of vegetation in autumn. They show what they can do but—this bad—they show again what they can't do. They justify the critic—painılly if he is amiable—who sees he was right the first time when he disovered their limitations. (Confirmation from pedagogy: ever so religiously ıe professor reads the pupil's last paper for the year, then the boy receives ıe same mark he had three months ago.) Autumn time for poets is a pretty me and a sad time at the same time. Be fair to autumn poets. All who re poets shall become autumn poets unless they are autumn poets now.

Be fair to young poets born into this autumn of poetry. They won't e young long, it is not permitted. Where everybody watches young poets,

King Jasper, by Edwin Arlington Robinson. With an Introduction by obert Frost. New York: Macmillan. $2.00. *A Mad Lady's Garland,* by uth Pitter. New York: Macmillan. $1.25. *Invisible Landscapes,* by dgar Lee Masters. New York: Macmillan. $2.00. *Trial Balances,* edited y Ann Winslow. New York: Macmillan. $2.00. *Theory of Flight,* by Muriel Rukeyser. New Haven: Yale University Press. $2.00. *Call Back he Spring,* by Daniel Whitehead Hicky. New York: Holt. $1.75. *Sea ieces,* by Forrest Anderson. New York: Cassowary Press. $2.00. *The sland Called Pharos,* by Archibald Fleming. New York: Liveright. $2.00. *Murder in the Cathedral,* by T. S. Eliot. New York: Harcourt, Brace. $1.25.

young poets start watching themselves. Then they become pretty poets, smart poets, perfectionists, precious poets, as the poetic drive bogs down. Education, influences, poetic objectives, intention, definition, realization, T. S. Eliot, this man's art and that man's scope, talk talk talk, self-consciousness. To each young poet too many old critics.

Be fair. But be yourself, you who claim to be a critical reviewer. (Business of examining *Selbstbild* of critic as tough character.) Call the play as you see it, make them mind the rules, both the old and the young. Don't shake hands till the game is over, then go and lie down and think up the excuses for them. As we were boys and girls once, we shall be the doddering eld.

Salute to Edgar Lee Masters. Make no mistake, this is a man, impartial as Justice and fearless as Hell. Yet in our Mr. Masters there is a starved sweet streak, which comes out bashfully but periodically in lyric poetry. (Significant analogy: when the hard-boiled physical scientist breaks down and joins the spiritists). He tries it again in *Invisible Landscapes,* perhaps comes a little nearer to the thing this time. But it is astonishing what a man will do for poetry. Look at this:

> What youth of brawn and fire
> Dreams not of El Dorado,
> Who walks his city's prado,
> Or keeps his father's byre?
> What youth who scorns his sire
> To drink amontillado,
> Or play at desperado,
> Hears not the luring lyre
> Beyond the village spire?

In this passage he has traveled a long way from Spoon River, Illinois, and he is not at home. The title poem is less absurd though still not right. Offers a pretty solace for our universal autumn turning-time (sub-species for the immortality of the soul), and begins:

> Dead flesh of men goes under
> The landscape and is sealed;
> Their souls remain a wonder
> Made one with hill and field

And lie transparent shadows,
Like auras or the light
Around eclipses, on meadows
Perceived by second sight.
Each generation films
Its landscape . . .

This is big, let us say, but is it so? The more emphatic the poet waxes, the more embarrassed we. (Methinks the gentleman doth . . .) Says he, concluding,

You cannot have millions of men
Who march, who harvest and plow,
Who grow and die as grain,
Who feast, who laugh, who bow . . .
Save invisible landscapes rest
In layers like fallen leaves.

To which the red-eyed honest critic replies that you certainly can. Not that the supernatural fancy is illegal, but that there's a right way to employ it, and that this is the wrong way. If you are politic you don't make a flat generalization of it, and spread it over an area of five pages to have maximum visibility. Technique of the metaphysical conceit. Thomas Hardy understood it; there was a tactician for you. More than once he used a conceit very close to this one and worked it. The particular dead man's covering essence on the particular landscape: he sensed it so powerfully that nobody would want to doubt him. He did not erect it into a dogma and dispute it with the naturalists. It's a question of the touch. Mr. Masters' is not light.

Now for Miss Ruth Pitter, an English miss as I gather, with her *Mad Lady's Garland*. Young in years she may be but she is taking no chances on the youthful effect. Her madness is only north-north-west at the worst. Miss P. is as nice a wordsmith and as quaint a wit as ever dispensed a garland. Big guns announce her arrival, Mr. Hilaire Belloc with a Preface and the Poet Laureate with an Introduction. The trouble is that she is really a professional. She writes parodies exclusively, so that if she is full of perfections, they are not strictly her own. In "The Pious Lady

Trout" the title character describes her beauty and moralizes her existence with engaging primness, to conclude thus:

> How am I fed? most fitly on the fair
> Stream's self, but I myself a task have set
> To leap and snatch those sinners of the air
> That off this element presume to get;
> So piously I purge the gentle sky
> Of nasty atomies that dare to fly.

Everything in the volume being done as well as that, with the exception of the lines in which naughty Miss Pitter registers some of our cis-Atlantic influences and uses current slang. Defying the critic of puritan principles. She is so perfect at receiving influences I suppose we must not expect her to be entirely virtuous. Her models usually good safe old ones: Langland, Chaucer, the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century men, Spenser preferred. Importing Spenser into an age as unspenserian as it could be, she fairly makes him shine, and be the poet he has been reputed to be, poets' poet, and better teacher than Aquinas. Miss Pitter cannot be seriously damaged by the "intensive criticism" of critics, being formal perfection, and probably ought to be delivered from their "general considerations," being pure wit. All the same this Western world is not China, neither is it Egypt, and I don't think parody and imitation quite the thing for creative poets. I wish they were. The poets have to express their own modern, disorderly, reaching-and-disappointed, informed-yet-foolish minds. This poet is a walking epitome of old ways of thought and sense, but a poet in this rôle is an anachronism, as stuffed as the Queen Elizabeth who is propped up at Westminster Abbey, or the Oxford don who makes Latin jokes in the Senior Common Room. She is a Renaissance Exhibit. (Memo: use Miss P. in English 24.)

Leading literary event: a posthumous poem by Edwin Arlington Robinson, with an Introduction by Robert Frost in tribute to the dead poet. Good prose. The subtle terse Yankee style of the prose introduction as characteristic of the one poet as the rhetorical and mildly-pungent mystification of the poem is characteristic of the other one. I'll take the prose. The poem classifies like this: another narrative poem by E. A. R.

These later narrative poems were distinctly his, each new one showing that he was not fooling. But as he grew old and fabulous the poetic phrensy had abated, and he declined into this gentle melancholy, this riddling dialogue and moral earnestness. Here is a bit of it:

> The queen, with a monotony unaltered
> And with no smile, said, "Jasper, I am sorry,
> But mine are a ghost's hands, if yours are not.
> I know your purpose, and I know those hands
> Down there, and everywhere, that may have power
> To crush us. If they do, I shall not care—
> So long as I'm permitted not to touch them.
> No, mine are the cold hands of an old ghost
> That will not rest unfelt. But for the while
> He stays invisible, we'll not mention him.
> Let us imagine that he never was,
> And say no more of him."
>
> They said no more.
>
> He sat there, with the face of a man baffled,
> And found in hers no answer. Silently
> They sat alone, the king and queen together;
> And silently they turned, hearing at last
> A new sound, and a murmur of young voices.

The melody is pleasant, the tone is autumn-grey and very consistent. The emotional grip of this scene probably not transferred to you unless you are an esoteric Robinsonian, and know how to shut your eyes and let the quiet words grow big in your thoughts. A young poet without a public couldn't trade on a possibility like that. This is the reward of a well-spent life. The story in this poem you won't quite make out. Just enough there to make you think you see what he is driving at but not enough to make you want to publish your opinion; remember, Mr. Robinson's late readers had a way of registering approbation without being very explicit. But watch the names of the characters. King Jasper's kingdom is somewhere on high, and over certain chimneys, which reach down into the nether regions and smell sometimes of sulphur though usually of synthetic perfumes. Will the chimneys topple? He is afraid so. Invisible hands are clutching at them;

Honoria, the queen, who is psychic, tells him so, seems to hope so; it is not an entirely happy union, by the way. And now Jasper, the crown prince, makes some sort of alliance with the orphan Zoë and brings her to the palace, unwelcome. But all take to Zoë, sooner or later; allure. Mention of old Hebron, who was the king's faithful side-partner in mysterious enterprises until the king stole his rights and did away with him. (The patent rights to the chimneys, perhaps.) But Hebron, son of Hebron, appears and lets the king know that he knows. The king has very bad dreams. (Freud and Jung might have something for us here.) Finally he realizes that the chimneys will really topple and the kingdom crash. So they do. All die except Zoë, who stabs the villain Hebron with a mystic knife. The finish:

> Nothing alive
> Was left of Jasper's kingdom. There was only
> Zoë. There was only Zoë—alone.

And this may be E. A. R.'s way of intimating that our industrial civilization is all wrong. But it may not be.

Thirty-one young poets make their bow in *Trial Balances* (I wonder why not *Trial Balloons*), which is lovingly edited by Ann Winslow. Most of them have had some periodical publication. Sponsored by thirty-one older poets or critics, with thirty-one championing essays. It may be less difficult to grasp all those modest new poets than the same number of dogmatic old critics, but it is not easy. Impossible to define them all. Sometimes the exhibit is too slight to make you sure you catch the poet's distinction, sometimes you feel you have it but wonder if the poet will have changed his shape when you meet him again. Why not a book of fifteen or sixteen rather substantial young poets (though they must not yet be ready for individual books), with three or four times as much verse to work in and no critics? Volumes of verse are so slight nowadays, it would be a bargain. All the regular influences act upon these new poets; no ignominy in that sort of action. But when the very advanced influences seem to have more than their share of action it is time to deplore. Ominous topic: sophistication of the young in literature and art. The young poet probably should not take big jumps from one mental age to another. Let him take his time. Nature abhors jumps. We will all I think consent (the pedagogues and the

atrons of young poets) to the proposition that, while one historical period ıay be said to be more advanced than another in respect to some charac-eristic essence known as a *Zeitgeist*, yet among the individuals of any iven period all the mental ages must obtain at once. Even in the present eriod and under the greatest civilization the world has seen (quoted), vhen the poet short-cuts his own laborious development, his poetic stock ıust lag a long way behind. I shan't remember most of these poets. Not rbitrarily, but it may be accidentally, I have impressions of Ben Belitt, V. R. Moses, Elizabeth Bishop, Reuel Denney, Clark Mills, and the two Gyroscope poets, J. V. Cunningham and Don Stanford. These last two ome with formidable testimonials from Howard Baker and Yvor Winters, eaders of the Gyroscope group in California. I am much impressed by Mr. Baker's statement of the principles of the group:

> They extolled the transformation of the personal into the general and the human, of immediate Nature into understood Nature.

By this account, Gyroscope is no ordinary drill-ground for young poets but . graduate school, with heroic objectives. I know that the thing you have o din, din into the ordinary collegiate poet is that he must sharpen his erceptions of Nature, define his images more exactly. He has much more esource in the general than in the truly personal, and every handbook of cience give him an understanding of Nature at the expense of her imme-liacy. Messrs. Baker and Winters have a Humanistic twang in their speech, nd the Humanists have often been found among the enemies to poetry, articularly deadly to erudite youthful poets. Still (because of, in spite f?) Cunningham and Stanford are good poets. I cannot help wishing we ad their own account of the order and stepping-stones in their develop-nent.

Muriel Rukeyser. One of the poets in *Trial Balances* but in fact a much better poet than she allowed herself to appear there; amply proved ow in her Yale Younger Poets volume, *Theory of Flight*. A Vassar girl, wenty-one, and at first perhaps only the ordinary big-eyed romantic think-ng that experience, experience of any sort, was the most wonderful thing n the world, and that the world should hear of it. Then a passionate prole-arian and at this stage, if it does not sound too strange, developing remark-

ably in dignity and intelligence. From "Child and Mother," one of the later poems:

> Nakedly to the extremes of the world come bathers
> advancing, the pale skin pathetic against the sea,
> untried and bare: the flesh, the bones' thin tubes
> facing dim oceans, raving hurricane, windspill,
> leviathan-tyranny.
>
> Child, you shall grow to follow,
> survive, and find
> wet hollow, submarine terror
> not so unkind
> as to blast strength, your eyes
> unsealed, and an armed mind.

Some Yeats appears unexpectedly in this poem, and some Eliot, MacLeish, Cummings, appear in poems *passim*. Technically seasoned. The Rukeyser question for critics: Isn't the Left a good direction for the too-sensuous younger poet who otherwise would be always exalting his own feelings? It is towards generosity and objectivity. Set this to the credit of the proletarian movement, the one which the intellectuals conduct, that it offers apprenticeship to poets of a certain type. It does not offer a living, I believe. I won't waive a fixed reservation as to proletarian literature that the moment a poet becomes fanatically interested, or burnt up with moral indignation on behalf of the wrongs of the poor, he is done as a poet. Yeats did receive an intense poetic activation from his political situation. But he has quite held back from what Mr. Allen Tate calls Platonism in poetry. Poetry always has to run from the persuasions of moralists. Moral ideas can fasten so obsessively that the delicate integer-state which is poetry simply is smashed. There are proletarian gospellers and real proletarian poets but there is a line between them. When the poet "joins" and takes the bloody oath, he crosses it. No career awaits the poet who is not sure whether poetry is a sufficient career. Miss Rukeyser is on the spot.

Daniel Hicky (*Call Back the Spring*) seems not to advance willingly in experience at all, and to practice poetry for the sake of reversion. His title-poem, a sonnet, is about lovers now "worn with loving" or, as we

hould say, no longer much in love; but the man recalls to the other their outhful passion, with the admonitions, Remember daisies, and, Call back ne spring. Foolish. Passion for the spring, then something suitable for ne summer, something else still for autumn. Poetry is not a device for scaping from our maturity. Be poetical but be as grown-up about it as ou can. And yet, all this in Daniel Hicky may be the purest pose, for I now nothing about his personality, not even about his age. He may just ave observed that it is always considered "good" in poetry (like navy blue n men's suits) to remember daisies, or jasmine flowers, or youth. I am urer of another complaint against Daniel Hicky: his perceptions are ncredibly blunt and haphazard, a fact which may not be unrelated to his utatively barren existence. His "Credo" begins,

> I am not one of those who hold
> That cunning, panting tiger, Gold,
> Is at the world's throat, sinking there
> His furious claws; that grim despair
> Will overtake it, draw its breath,
> Leaving the world a planet of death
> Where all that once was beautiful
> Is only food for hawk and gull.

These lines make a pretty noise but the images they express are faked, or lse too too wonderful. Gold seen as a tiger, and a panting one; the world s a man, the tiger's victim, with clawed throat; but the victim must have scaped, and taken to flight, for next despair is after him, and catches him. What beast is despair? Apparently one that sucks the breath, worse than clawing one. Victim dies, and metamorphosis takes place, as in old Ovid: nan turns into planet of death. Mr. Hicky's conscience makes him look harp to his meters. Why not try for integrity in the images? Reading pro- gram for Mr. Hicky: I. A. Richards' *Practical Criticism;* later, T. S. Eliot's *Selected Essays.*

A physically beautiful book is *sea pieces,* by forrest anderson. The oetry, very arty; the slickness is genius, it amounts to lubricity; phrases nd phrases, with relations to be supplied by the reader. What the reader's eward would be, I wish I knew. All E. A. Robinson's secrets are noble

ones (universal testimony) however people construe them. As to Mr. Anderson's, I (can't decode them but I) think they are about homosexual sailors. Fit audience though few. A good place for the expert obscure style is in poems about homosexual sailors.

A powerful talent is this of Archibald Fleming in *The Island Called Pharos*. Archibald MacLeish (one Archibald of another) has a temperate word about him as follows:

> Anyone interested in the poetic idiom of the generation now in its twenties . . . will do well to give thoughtful and appreciative attention to his work.

But what is this about poetic idiom, exactly? It is not as if Fleming had manners and speech-tricks, even as much of them as MacLeish has, or even manners and speech-tricks not peculiar to him but generic to his generation. Take this for a fair sample:

> By this the level, open, leaden sweep
> Across the murky vast they stand and wait.
> The spires burn in the silence; veils of sleep
> Compass the dreaming city. At the gate
> These, the suppliant, gather, move their chains,
> Raising with a fitful morbid music
> Their banded arms: "In these our pains
> In this our uttermost distress, O vaulted city,
> Deny us not a light." The silence shifts
> And settles in the shadow. Secret places
> Formulate the hour of their trial.

The easy force of this passage will not prove proportionate to the abundance of discoverable novelties; which are hardly there. Its virtues are economy, tension, direct predication, the qualities of poetic power generally. If the ooccasion demands it Fleming has more power ready to turn on. In the following lines it takes effect by the use of startling word compounds, and abrupt coördinate series of terms; which possibly, is to do no more than an extension of Shakespeare:

> Here at the forefront whelming crag,
> Invisible brain-steep and shoulderwall.

Mid-abyss-elbow, here they slip sag
Pluck rotten holding plunge, and headlong fall.

me of the difficulty of this is due to my having removed it out of context; me more to a distinct modernism, neglect of the punctuation. Fleming is t an imitative poet though a soundly assimilative one. His long poems, tlas" and "Adonis," suggest *The Waste Land* in their thesis. Without ploying allusion with Eliot's machine-gun frequency, he does taste in trospect the famous comforts of religion and like Eliot finds them bitter. e goes further and tries the philosophies and the sciences, some very lysyllabic ones, which makes certain passages more daring and heavier an Eliot's. He is serious, rugged. Is yet to show how much sense of the tistic form he can develop.

T. S. Eliot's latest is *Murder in the Cathedral.* A snappy title. (Mildly barrassing association: "Murder in Mesopotamia," detective serial running in the world's most popular weekly literary organ.) A drama that starts ligious but reverts, declines, very distinctly towards snappiness. Can Eliot stain the religious tone? As critic, as a prose man, anybody can sustain y tone, by main strength; as a poet you do it only if the tone is you, or grace of God implanted in you. Literary evidence is that Eliot is religious ore by conviction than by grace. Pertinent reflection, that Eliot's seriousss has always been in his criticism and in his critical manner (which is metimes pontifical) while his poetry has hardly ever managed to get rid modernity and snappiness; just reversing the order of things we probably lieve in. Perhaps a thousand lines of verse in this play and two scenes prose besides: enough to take some sustaining. But before remark begins sound disgracing, do him the honor to compare him with the former rds of poetry, who were as the giants before the flood; not with his conmporaries, who for all their elegance, or because of it, are costive, and capable of remarkable catharses, who make preciosity their virtue, d among whom he is reasonably called lord. It is high honor. And by old andards it quickly appears that *sostenuto* is the one signal lack in Eliot's uipment. His strongest effects are not by sustaining the note but by xtaposing incongruous notes, by brilliant discords; modernism itself. Call irony, it is disruptive still. It comes out of a personal disintegration and

unfaith. Unless it is fairer to say it comes out of an age of unfaith. But leave that. The play's the thing. And the cue to the criticism: to compare it with something similar in the big creative epochs. Our election is almost certain; it falls on the *Samson Agonistes* of Milton. (I am sorry that Eliot dislikes Milton, but that is perfectly fortuitous. The present comparison need have nothing to do with such deficiency as Eliot finds in Milton.) Now Milton, at a certain stage in his spiritual history, was like Eliot, one of a diminishing party of adherents to an old faith, out of touch in his deepest interests with the "spirit of his times." And *Samson* is like *Murder* in being first a drama, then a historical drama, then a loving religious historical drama. Samson's immolation like Becket's martyrdom, too; a pair of fine occasions for the religio-poetic faculties of two accomplished poets; equally appealing to the imagination. But, as histories, documented bodies of data for dramatic arrangement, the Becket material greatly exceeding the Samson material in voluminousness, and much closer in contemporaneity and acquaintance; so that Eliot's play should be closer, fuller, Milton's play the one pieced-out and briefer. It is just the contrary. Milton's is longer yet much more severely unified, and it is Eliot who has to make use of skits and fireworks. The fundamental difference which I am afraid of: in the respective original poetic energies themselves. Milton, always a thorough workman, tackling his occasions like a professional, challenging any occasion, giving always more than the occasion's decent minimum requirement; see *Comus* and *Lycidas,* and a dozen prose affairs. The distinguished modern, a brilliant amateur, whose performance will have stimulating novelties but will not keep you long. Even if the morning's post should come bringing a rare occasion, as this: "The Chapter would like very much to present in the Cathedral an original drama having to do with its own history, and such as Mr. Eliot might care to write." (Against misunderstanding, once more; the limitations not personal to T. S. E., or at least not necessarily; generic to his age. The late Mr. Robinson could have done a big thing with this subject, but not a powerful thing, nothing Miltonic; the power of his effects not being proportionate to his ability to sustain them.) The best thing that Milton had, looked at from this distance, was *copia,* God's plenty, unlimited wealth in poetic stock; it did not give out, nor need reinforcements, nor require dilution. Thus in the Samson

ay, a chorus of wise old men but not for decoration. Their lines not only rical but religious, and not only religious but hammering incessantly on mson's own religious agony, discussing and emphasizing the truth which the truth of the play. So has the Becket play a chorus, but of silly old omen, who are picturesque and lyrical but very aimless and repetitive, rrulous old women, going on about life and presently going on about ath; above all, knowing nothing in the world about poor Becket's inner agedy. Are they in the play to repel the thought that this is a stiff Cathe- al play? Certainly Becket proceeds nobly and with full understanding to s martyrdom, and it is all clearly communicated to us, but a great deal the action does not concern this although it is a small play. And as r poetries of the two poets. The poetry never flags in the *Samson,* it gages in every situation, it flows through every mind; but that in the *urder* gives way twice to prose, and one of these times to a prose more an usually anomalous in a poetic drama. Becket preaches a last sermon, d the author provides him with a very fine one; but could not the poetry similate this occasion and produce a poetic homily? If the poet's denial poetry is out of ecclesiastical considerations (saying here is an historical chbishop in his pulpit), this is a personal but not literary scruple. The her prose passage seems as freakish and insubordinate as anything ever competent drama. It breaks in the first place with dramatic propriety. he four knights are just assassins, villains, nameless fellows, forces of il, agents with a bad job to do. Suddenly, after the job is done, when the ay is really about over, and the mind of the audience full of its central eaning, the author softens on behalf of his villains, or he wearies of s strictness in drama—at any rate he decides to characterize them, to make em somebodies, to give them a big scene; a gross disrespect to a dead chbishop to say the least. And it breaks with the tone. The murderers nvene the people and defend their act. Their speeches are not just prose, t actually modern mock-parliament hustings stuff, clever—if we were not ther too bewildered to understand it—and probably satirical.

> . . . In what we have done, and whatever you may think of it, we have been perfectly disinterested. (*The other Knights*: 'Hear! hear!'). *We* are not getting anything out of this. We have much more to lose than to gain. We are four plain Englishmen who put our country first.

> I dare say that we didn't make a very good impression when we came in. The fact is that we knew we had taken on a pretty stiff job; I'll only speak for myself, but I had drunk a good deal—I am not a drinking man ordinarily—to brace myself up for it. When you come to the point, it does go against the grain to kill an Archbishop, especially when you have been brought up in good Church traditions. So, if we seemed a bit rowdy, you will understand why it was; and for my part I am awfully sorry about it. We realized that this was our duty, but all the same we had to work ourselves up to it. And, as I said, *we* are not getting a penny out of this.

The note of this is like a note that Auden sounds, that most witty and far-gone modern poet; and a surprising, disconcerting note for this play, or for anything that is not by intention cynical and desperate. But now, and finally, even supposing the proses were out, what of the quality of the poetry? The proses don't exactly spoil a great poem, for the poetry itself is not quite sure and consistent. The poetry breaks. I won't quote from the song and dance which the drunken knights stage; that is beneath criticism. Take the choral passages, which run on to great length. Obviously, the women must be stopped from falling into a singsong, into a rigamarole of grief or terror; so there are times when the poet must increase the pace. (This poet does not tolerate monotony, he makes a point of variety, and rising and falling motions, he understands poetic composition.) The women have a sudden prescience of evil, and when they go to register it, it turns out that their force is just violence, not really poetic force. I quote:

> I have smelt
> Death in the rose, death in the hollyhock, sweet pea, hyacinth, primrose and cowslip. I have seen
> Trunk and horn, tusk and hoof, in odd places;
> I have lain on the floor of the sea and breathed with the breathing of the sea-anemone, swallowed with ingurgitation of the sponge.
> I have lain in the soil and criticized the worm. In the air
> Flirted with the passage of the kite, I have plunged with the kite and cowered with the wren. I have felt

> The horn of the beetle, the scale of the viper, the mobile hard insensitive skin of the elephant, the evasive flank of the fish. I have smelt
>
> Corruption in the dish, incense in the latrine, the sewer in the incense, the smell of sweet soap in the woodpath, a hellish sweet scent in the woodpath, while the ground heaved.

Which is only a part of a passage full of astonishing items in the listed or ategorical manner, suggesting the wisdom of Pliny's natural history and ie vocabulary of the King James Bible, and closing not at all prettily:

> What is woven on the loom of fate
> What is woven in the councils of princes
> Is woven also in our veins, our brains,
> Is woven like a pattern of living worms
> In the guts of the women of Canterbury.

his is a striking assemblage of poetic ingredients, at the best, and short of ie highest poetry in the same degree perhaps as its loose metric is short E the firm work of the *Samson* chorics. And so to bed. On the conclusion, iat there are features of Eliot's play not worthy of the analogues in the der tradition. That this comparison which would be too hard on other oderns, is not kind even to Eliot. That the play might be very good by ommon modern standards, but Eliot knows how weak are modern stan- ards. That with its "features" it might have done well even for the Eliza- ethan stage, but Eliot knows what a fatal turn for vaudeville that stage ad.

SOME RECENT NOVELS

Robert Penn Warren

WHAT IS valuable in the current "regional movement" is not new in so far as it refers to the novel or, in final analysis, to poetry. The great classics of American fiction, the best work of Hawthorne or of Mark Twain or of Melville, are something else before they are American. By inspiration, Hawthorne and Melville are, for instance, of New England; then, almost by political and geographical definition only, or by a mystical hocus-pocus of definition, they are American. *Moby Dick* is, with very slight and mechanical qualification, quite as "regional" as *The Scarlet Letter*. Its stage of action is the deck of a whaler and not a New England village, but the whaler is only New England afloat, New England with its edges whetted and its essence concentrated by the valiant rigors of that calling in which it discovered a special congeniality. The premises of the story of Ahab and

Golden Apples, by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50. *Red Sky in the Morning*, by R. P. Tristram Coffin. New York: Macmillan Co. $2.50. *Brothers Three*, by John M. Oskison. New York: Macmillan Co. $2.50. *Honey in the Horn*, by H. L. Davis. New York: Harper & Brothers. $2.50. *Free Forester*, by Horatio Colony. Boston: Little, Brown, and Co. $2.50. *The Wind Blew West*, by Edwin Lanham. New York: Longmans, Green, & Co. $2.50. *This Body the Earth*, by Paul Green. New York: Harper & Brothers. $2.50. *A Sign for Cain*, by Grace Lumpkin. New York: Lee Furman, Inc. $2.50. *Pier 17* by Walter Havighurst. New York: Macmillan Co. $2.00. *From the Kingdom of Necessity*, by Isidor Schneider. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. $2.50. *South*, by Frederick Wight. New York: Farrar & Rinehart, Inc. $3.00.

the White Whale afford a more metaphysical approach to New England, and the tragedy of New England, than do those of the story of the lovers in *The Scarlet Letter*. Or it might be put otherwise: Melville tends to employ the religious and the mythical approach, Hawthorne, in *The Scarlet Letter* and elsewhere, the social or allegorical. But the theme is finally the same: the grandeur and the terrible incompleteness of the New England conception of man's rôle in the world brought into conflict with the multiform, recalcitrant, seductive, and violent world. But there is also Henry James. James, also, as a large body of criticism testifies, must often be discussed in the terminology of the New England tradition, although his people may be several generations, and his scenes some thousands of miles, removed from the streets of a New England village or the deck of a whaler.

Today it may seem to a writer who wants to write novels, or does write novels, perhaps even very good novels as our contemporary novels go, that Hawthorne and Melville, for instance, were peculiarly happy writers. It may seem to the modern writer that those two men had, as it were, half of their thinking done for them before they even began to think about writing at all. It may be that the illusion of time deceives the modern novelist who remembers Hawthorne and Melville just at the uncomfortable moment when he himself gets ready to sit down at his work table to fight his own battles in the confusion of their detail. Or it may be that all artistic works of great power enchant the reader or observer so intensely that he feels that their creators were, somehow, in possession of an inner ease and certainty denied to later practitioners.

If it seems that those happy writers, Hawthorne and Melville, had, when they sat down to execute *The Scarlet Letter* and *Moby Dick,* half of their thinking already done for them, why does it seem so? It may seem so to the modern writer, because he feels that Hawthorne and Melville were under no necessity of hunting for a theme; the theme, the fundamental idea, the obsession, if you will, was already theirs, and theirs so easily, so naturally, so inherently, that they were relieved of any compulsion to seek deliberately "ideas" with which to engage their talents, and being freed from such compulsion, could devote themselves to the proper concern of an artist, the study of the problem of concretely realizing the

theme in projected human experience. So easily, so naturally, so inherently—or at least it seems so to the later writer, who, in his wistfulness, may be a little too readily inclined to forget the dubieties, hazards, and perplexities that must have beset then, as now, the progress of artistic endeavor.

But, after all, perhaps more now than then; for the contemporary writer, apparently, labors under a more stringent necessity of seeking his theme, his material. This hypothetical being, the contemporary writer, feels in himself his latent powers, and the impulse in himself to direct these powers in a satisfying and worthy course, but he must first discover a theme, unless he is content to project in symbol after symbol the frustration and confusion he suffers because he is *not* in possession of a theme that will afford him an appropriate canalization of his powers. But it is certainly true that at no time was the novelist, or poet for that matter, relieved of the responsibility of inspecting the aims of the society from which he stemmed and in which he moved, and of pondering the inevitable puzzles proposed to him by the spectacle of human existence. But there is an important difference discernible in the motives that may lead the novelist or poet into such an activity. First, he may engage himself in such an activity as a part, and perhaps the most significant part, of his rôle as a citizen and a human being. He is, then, motivated by the conviction that the study of the springs of human conduct and the representation of human conduct are important and positive because the human creature possesses an inalienable dignity and interest; and then, his effort to perform as an artist, to create from the premises of his speculations and the passions provoked by them, is in itself, finally, but a phase of his own conduct as a human being and, as a matter of fact, a citizen. His work, therefore, may more nearly achieve an objectivity and give an impression of fulfillment; it is not forever tied to his own personality, and the act of parturition is, indeed, complete. The work may be, therefore, a genuine creation.

In the second place, he may engage himself in that activity, in that observation and questioning, for a very different set of reasons. The activity, differently then, is not a phase of his rôle as human being or, perhaps, citizen. In that case, he may perform an abstraction, and may look about him merely in his rôle as artist. That is, he is searching for a theme—some-

hing to give meaning to his impulse, a scaffolding or stage on which he may arade, a device to permit the expression, ultimately, of his own personlity. His speculative questions, then, are undertaken not because he holds hat they, in themselves, are finally important; they are but a means to an nd, an end which, we have been frequently assured in recent years, is of reat importance and magnificence. That end is self-expression; just that. Ie has primarily defined himself as an artist—a pard-like spirit, beautiful nd swift and quite unlike other persons. His concerns are not their conerns, and he is inclined, with the egotism of frail mortality, to set a very igh valuation on his own concerns. With his intelligence, his sensitivity, his terary genius even, he may do a great deal to make that valuation appear ot too absurd. But he, our hypothetical contemporary writer, does not lways seem thoroughly content.

It may be objected that the foregoing distinction is not a real one. Peraps it is not, for the simplicities of historical definition may be delusions, lways. It may be objected that Milton, a writer of the past, devoted years f his life to the search for a worthy theme, that he merely felt his great owers burgeoning within him and under that compulsion cast about for omething on which to exercise them; he wished to leave something that osterity would "not willingly let die." Milton left a record of his search, record composed largely of scattered commentaries, but a record fundaentally more instructive, more complete than those left by most artists, ecause Milton was enormously self-conscious and because he was directly nvolved in a revolutionary movement. But was the object of Milton's earch a "theme" in the sense in which the term has been previously used n the course of this paper? No, it was not. The object of his search was ppropriate subject, not theme; and the difference is important. For nstance, the subject of *Paradise Lost* is the story of the Fall of Man, the tory of what happened to Adam and Eve. But the theme is the nature of ustice, the relation of human will to Divine Will, the relation of Good to vil: in short, as Milton put it, the justification of "God's ways to man." t is conceivable that Milton might have used another subject, though probbly one not as effective, for the vehicle of his theme. (The themes of *King ear* and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* are very similar to, though less comlicated than, the theme of *Paradise Lost;* but the stories involved in the

three masterpieces are vastly different.) The subject is the device used by the writer to objectify the theme, to dramatize it, to realize it in experience.

We know that Milton did, in cold blood, seek a subject, that he did consider and discard, that the nature of his future subject occasioned prolonged debate in his mind. That may often be the obligation of the writer; though sometimes, more happily, it may be a question of selecting out of his fullness rather than of seeking out of his dearth. And it might be more accurate to say that Milton did select and sift from his fullness. But the two processes amount, in one sense, to the same thing; and they can be highly deliberate, an exercise of calculation rather than the enjoyment of luck or the play of artistic instinct. The point is that the process, whichever it may be, is undertaken for the definite and exclusive purpose of creating a novel or poem or play. It represents the artist functioning *as* artist.

Milton, as artist, was under the necessity of searching for a subject, or of weighing this possible subject against that possible subject. His poems present a variety of subjects—the Lady wandering into the wood of Comus, the death by drowning of King, the Fall of Man, the consequences of the love of Samson and Dalila; but little variety of theme. They present a development, rather than a variety, of theme. And that theme was, basically, the relation of human will to Divine Will. He did not adopt the theme because he wanted to be a poet and because he thought that the theme would help him organize his material and focus his genius. His long probings into the theme, the arduous discipline of his studies, his observations of men and affairs, his service to a revolutionary state, were undertaken not for "literary" purposes, not to "gather material" or to achieve "a point of view," but to fulfill what he thought to be his duty to God, to society, and to himself, himself not as a poet, but as a man. He conceived of himself—so one eminent scholar contends—as a "normal" person, as a person "representative," in the best sense, of society, not as an *artist* set off against society. Being an artist was but one way of serving God.

The contemporary writer, looking back on Milton, Melville, Hawthorne, Hardy, or Fielding, may be overwhelmed by the sense of his own separateness and be led, it may be in his weakness, to believe that they owned a secret, not merely a secret of technical expertness, that is not his. Further, he may feel that something that once bound author and audience

together, some common tie of values, some sustaining convention, is lost. The poet suffers more in this respect than the novelist and is more desperate; but the novelist, unless flown with the insolence of high-pressure sales and movie rights, may experience the same perplexity. (Theodore Dreiser and Stark Young must have experienced it when they saw for the first time the moving pictures made from *An American Tragedy* and *So Red the Rose;* or Ernest Hemingway when he saw the conclusion of the Hollywood version of *A Farewell to Arms*. Those events must have put the question narrowly.) The novelist may even know more about putting a novel together than Fielding, Hardy, or Hawthorne knew; but that is not enough, that is not the secret. And so he may try to reason himself into the appropriate position, to perform the ritual to evoke the wayward spirit.

The current rationalizations and rituals are numerous; the prescriptions vary from critic to critic and from artist to artist. The "regional movement" and the "proletarian movement" are the two rationalizations in greatest vogue at this moment, since "humanism" was stillborn, and Catholicism and Anglo-Catholicism have not defined their specific literary prescriptions for popular consumption. The regional movement may be defined, in brief and in part, as the attempt of a writer to reason himself into the appropriate relation to the past; the proletarian movement, as the attempt to reason himself into the appropriate relation to the future. Regionalists have claimed many saints: Shakespeare, Hardy, Sophocles, Melville, Hawthorne, Milton, Sitting Bull, Wordsworth, W. B. Yeats, Flaubert, and the unknown composers of the ballads. For they ransack literature, and canonize, somewhat indiscriminately, whoever strikes the personal admiration. But regionalists share few special saints in common, for they have no dogma and they worship where they will. But the members of the proletarian movement have no saints at all, in this sense, for the literature they most enthusiastically admire is unwritten. But they do have a dogma. The golden age for one group is in the past, for the other in the future; and the critic may feel, in a momentary irritation, that it is equally remote in either case, and inaccessible, for the giants are not now.

Regionalism is, from one point of view, an inadequate name for the movement it serves to designate. The element of tradition, the relation of an un-dead past to a present, bulks large in the content of the movement.

This traditional aspect may be emphasized in regard to religion, philosophy, political history, social history, manners and customs, or folklore; or in regard to all of these. So, as I have said, the regionalist is attempting to reason himself into an appropriate relation to the past. But these items are for him always involved with a special place. He professes great respect for similar instincts in the inhabitants of other places—except at some moments when his emphasis is on political history; but he reserves his special pieties for his own familiar haunts, pieties the more devout if those haunts were the haunts of his childhood too. Then, the regional movement is, in addition, the attempt of the writer to define his appropriate relation to a special place. But according to the proletarian movement this attempt smacks of antiquated religion, patriotism, or even fascism; for the proletarian movement is itself international in its reasoning. (But here the proletarian writer is sometimes betrayed, at least momentarily betrayed, for he may write with a particular locale for his action, and as he looks about, in so far as there is a poet in him, he may begin to look too long and too lovingly, and so to commemorate another kind of vision from that which was his at first. For nature, like religion, can be an "opiate for the people," though not for so many people.)

Further, the proletarian movement is an attempt on the part of the writer to reason himself into an appropriate relation to a class. The regional movement, with some implied conception of an organic society in its background, denies the desirability of such a program, claiming that the focus of literary inspiration should be the individual, not the class. (And here the proletarian writer claims, sometimes with justice, that the regional writer is betrayed, despite his fine professions, into being the spokesman and propagandist, too, for a class, the bourgeois class. As a matter of fact, the tendency among regional writers, motivated probably by the "folk" element in the content of their theorizing, or sometimes by the historical element, i. e., the "frontier," has been to write about simple people or people of lower economic or social condition; this, says the proletarian writer, is snobbery—as it sometimes is without doubt, as in the case of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings—or a sentimentality and deception that retard the revolutionary reality.)

These attitudes in regard to the matter of class have corollaries in

regard to the matter of property. Both regional and proletarian writers are attempting to reason themselves into an appropriate relation to the concept of property, the proletarian writer more consciously than the regional writer in most instances. But the rationalizations are very different. The proletarian writer regards the *concept* of property—not necessarily his own *personal* property—as a millstone about the artistic neck. As Gorki says: "the act of complete and real emancipation of the peasantry from the power of the earth, from the yoke of ownership."

The regional writer connects the idea of property, that is, real property as opposed to abstract property, with his idea of the relation of man to place, for ownership gives a man a stake in a place and helps to define his, for the regional writer, organic relation to society. There are, for witness, the number of regional novels that treat of the hunger for land, or the relation of an individual or family to a farm or homestead; most of these novels attempt to describe, as a number of poems imply, the fusion of the simple economic fact of ownership with the entire emotional life.

But all of this proposes another distinction: the proletarian writer has a bias toward industrialism, and generally treats of life in a manufacturing or commercial center; the regional writer usually, but not necessarily, has an agrarian bias, and writes, not of the metropolis, but of the hinterland which is his own by accident or election. When the proletarian writer treats of rural life there ordinarily lurks somewhere in the background of the performance the proposition that the mechanization of its processes, the application of industrial organization, would remove from it the stigma of *peasant life,* that is, the life which the regionalist is often inclined to sentimentalize, or idealize, as the case may be. For the proletarian writer is fundamentally impatient with the "peasant," and contemptuous of him.

The proletarian writer feels behind him, motivating his creative energies, an organized economic and political program, and even a political party. He may not be a member of the Communist or Socialist Party, he may not even bother to vote in presidential years, but the fact that such parties exist and attempt direct action necessarily influences the attitude of the writer toward his own work. His work tends to become, explicitly, propaganda. And, since propaganda is immediately valuable, not in so far as it conditions the total life and energy of the reader and refines his sensi-

bility, but in so far as it provokes to specific action at the earliest possible date, the temptation for the writer is to simplify his constructs for the purpose of illustrating a proposition and of eliminating complicating factors in experience. (A formula tends to emerge. Jack Conroy, quoting Mike Gold, has pointed out that it is easy to write the first three acts of a revolutionary drama. "In the fourth act, however, the action must be resolved into some sort of climax—the strike is lost but the workers, undaunted, pledge themselves to continue the struggle; the central character awakens to social consciousness; or the strike is won and gives the workers fresh courage for the ultimate battle." It should, it appears to me, be equally easy, assuming that it is "easy" to write anything, to write the fourth act then, for the formula, the three possibilities laid down being really equivalent, relieves the dramatist of the necessity of exploring certain other possibilities. The possibilities chosen are chosen for "inspirational" purposes.) This type of politicalized literature, just like organized Nazi or Fascist literature, is usually based on a conception of literature as instrument; both types, communist or fascist, are attempts to reason the writer into an appropriate relation to politics. But no political party stands behind the regional writer, in fact, no organization of any description. The Democratic and Republican Parties take little interest in the seasonal output of verse and prose. And Mr. Farley's sole obligation in relation to literature is, as I understand it, to keep obscenity out of the mails. The sporadic "Conferences" and "Congresses" of writers in different sections of this country have been nonpolitical and have tended to define differences of opinion rather than concord; certainly, no program or dogma has emerged. The regional impulse in economic and political terms may be gaining ground and, conceivably, may achieve practical implementation, but as yet there is no formal connection between it and the literary regionalism. For the most part, the economists, editors, sociologists, and politicians who have favored a regional program of some kind have not done literature even the honor done it by the Communist Party or those of Communist sympathy; which may be as well, in the long run, for the writer. In some instances the philosophical presuppositions of the two types of regionalism may be in conflict, and the common name merely obscures a number of issues. Further, most of the regional writers—though this is speculation—appear to be dissatis-

ed with both of the dominant parties as well as with communism; and, n so far as they have acted politically, have acted as individuals and have roposed no specific connection between a literary and a political program.

I have enumerated a number of antitheses between the regional and he proletarian writer. But there is one important aspect which the two novements, as literary movements, share in common: both are revolution- ry. Both the proletarian and the regional writer are dissatisfied with the resent relation of the writer to society. The destructive criticism leveled gainst the present condition, stated and implied, that is, the negative side f the argument, may frequently be presented in terms of either the regional r the proletarian movement; both may be said to be opposed to finance apitalism and to resent the indignity heaped by that system of society pon the creative impulse, indignity which has succeeded in estranging ne artist from society and from the proper exercise of his function as "a nan speaking to men." To heal that rupture, to come to accord with the elf and with society, may be taken, in so far as the writers are concerned, s the underlying motivation of both movements.

Both movements have developed a certain faddishness. This is inevi- able, and does not imply, necessarily, a criticism of the ideas of either novement. It is inevitable for two reasons. First, either movement can be sed for purposes of sales promotion and advertising. So we find blurbs of nis general type: "This novel, by so-and-so, a young writer of unusual alent, presents a hitherto unexploited region"; or, "This novel dramati- ally presents the issue that every thinking man of our time is pondering— ne problem of social justice." At the American Writers' Congress, Henry Hart said: "At the moment, it is still possible for a publisher to say, as ne of them said recently, 'It's smart to be a Communist'." It is not quite so mart, perhaps, to be "regional," but regionalism, also, offers some fea- ures for commercial exploitation, though features not so sensational.

That first reason for the development of the faddishness is really unim- portant; it is simply the machinery for marketing books, good and bad, nder the present system and the present standards of taste. The second eason is more important, and has to do rather with the writers than the eaders or publishers. A writer may adopt one of the two literary modes or a variety of faddish reasons. He may do so simply because it is one way

of making his work catch on; by identifying himself with a "movement" he hopes to gain a stature which his work has not earned on its strictly literary merits. He is the literary racketeer. Or the writer who simply wants to "write" but has no real convictions may seize on a "movement" because he thinks it will solve his literary problem by giving him, ready-made, a set of ideas and a theme and a subject. He is the literary humming bird, sipping from one blossom after another, always on the move, always *au courant*. The racketeer is contemptible, the humming bird pathetic. They are the faddists, and the parasites. Today, both the regional and proletarian movements are full of them, and they are extremely vocal. Ten years ago, perhaps five, they were vocal in another "movement"; five or ten years from now they will espouse some movement yet in the womb of Time.

The humming bird is pathetic because he expects, always hopefully, something he can never get. He is looking for the easy solution. Naïvely, he attempts to solve his literary problems, and minister to his literary ambition, by seeking a theme on purely literary grounds. He may reason: Milton believed in God and wrote great poems; therefore, if I can persuade myself to believe in God I can write great poems too. Or: Hawthorne was essentially of New England and drew his themes from New England life, therefore, if I write about a "region" I can write great novels too. Neither God nor regionalism is a literary problem; nor is social justice. A commitment made on these grounds is nothing more than the final demonstration of a writer's fatuity and emptiness. A commitment from such a motivation does nothing to enlarge the experience and mind of the writer as a man or citizen, for literature is but a function, not a cause, of life; and it does nothing to solve his literary difficulties, for the literary consideration has been introduced at the wrong level. The writer, having made the commitment, the profession of faith, feels himself already "redeemed" as a writer, and is then content with the easy, obvious, and mechanical solution of the purely literary difficulties that confront him when he sets to work. If he is a proletarian writer he feels that the mere presentation of propaganda, the mere fact of writing with the orthodox attitude about a working man or about a strike, is enough; if he is a regional writer he feels that the mere recording with the proper piety the details of folklore, the details of local color, the details of dialect, the love of the "soil," is enough. That is not enough.

But another type of superficial approach may be defined. Assume a writer whose concern with the topics proposed by either the regional or proletarian movement is legitimate, that is, non-literary, non-faddish, and truly passionate. His very sincerity, the very fact of the depth and mass of his concern, may not do more than imperil his achievement unless his sensibility is so attuned and his critical intelligence so developed that he can effect the true marriage of his convictions, his ideas, i.e., his theme, with the concrete projection in experience, i. e., his subject. Wordsworth wrote one of his most famous, and most instructive, passages of criticism on this point:

> From such verses the Poems in these volumes will be found distinguished at least by one mark of difference, that each of them has a worthy *purpose*. Not that I always began to write with a distinct purpose formally conceived; but habits of meditation have, I trust, so prompted and regulated my feelings, as that my descriptions of such objects as strongly excite those feelings, will be found to carry along with them a *purpose* . . . For all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: and though this be true, Poems to which any value can be attached were never produced on any variety of subjects but by a man who, being possessed of more than usual organic sensibility, had also thought long and deeply.

Unless the writer understands the principle here enunciated he is probably committed to a program of perpetually illustrating and schematizing his ideas in creaking constructs of plot, wooden marionettes of character, and abstract and rhetorical dialogue. And he is also bound by a dogma of appropriate subject: the strike or the old homestead, as the case may be. But if his ideas are really assimilated, if he has "thought long and deeply," they will function without the machinery of illustration and will function in terms of any subject congenial to his powers. His works will be "found to carry along with them a *purpose*." As for the "more than usual organic sensibility"—that is the act of God.

II

Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings has written in *Golden Apples* a novel that will appeal to all who enjoyed *The Re-creation of Bryan Kent* by Harold

Bell Wright. Like that book, *Golden Apples* deals with the regeneration of a drunkard who is brought into contact with wholesome, simple people, with the unselfish love of a good woman, and with the beauties of nature. Richard Tordell, unjustly accused of an assault upon his young stepmother, in an English manor, is sent to Florida as a remittance man to live on a piece of property once owned, but abandoned, by an uncle. The property is a jungle-like hammock with a broken-down shack, in which two orphans, Luke and Allie Brinley, are squatting with the intention of clearing some of the land for farming. Tordell allows them to remain with him in the rebuilt shack to take care of him, while he promptly and efficiently becomes a drunkard. After he suffers a severe breakdown and is nursed back to health by little Allie, he begins to take an interest in life by seducing little Allie and permitting Luke to pursue his dream of making the hammock into an orange grove. Then Tordell discovers "his own sort" of people on the other side of the lake, people who have fox hunts, nice houses, good liquor, culture, and money; but Allie is pregnant now, and before Tordell can assume his rightful place as an ornament of that society which is just like home, he is horsewhipped by irate citizens of the "cracker" side of the lake. He is nursed back to health for the second time, now by the nice people on the other side of the lake, but honorably returns to marry Allie. But Tordell's hard times are over and he has two pieces of incredible good fortune: Allie dies in premature childbirth, leaving him with no responsibility, and the cuttings for his orange grove survive a terrific freeze that kills all the other groves. Of course, in the book, he experiences a sweet melancholy over Allie's passing, and later, as he looks at his new orange shoots, ponders, "It was not given to every man . . . to be present at the frail birth of Beauty." But the reader knows that it is much nicer for Allie, who for all her sweetness didn't really deserve such a cultured husband, to be dead, and that the "birth of Beauty" in the orange sprouts really represents good, hard American dollars. Tordell can now marry a nice girl and live happily ever after and never drink too much; in the course of the story the nice girl has been provided for such a contingency. Even honest Luke is not forgotten, for he marries an honest cracker half-wit and can be perfectly happy, too, with her to cook for him and an orange grove for him to supervise. Obviously, Mrs. Rawlings did not intend to write a serious

ovel; if she had so intended, she probably would have let Allie survive nd then have asked herself, "What about my story now?"

Golden Apples is, probably, a good example of regional faddishness: here is a sentimental story with appropriate trappings. The author con-inces the reader that tilling the soil has a charm all its own—a charm lightly more emphatic if the tiller in natty jodphurs canters about giv-ng orders; that she herself knows a good deal about the culture of citrus ruits; and that nature can exercise a regenerating influence on cynical roung men suffering from acute alcoholism. Mrs. Rawlings reports the uaint dialect of the Florida cracker with some degree of skill, and at times, hen dealing with Luke, almost creates a character.

The style of the novel is lyrical, glib, undistinguished, and sometimes edious. Here is the prothalamium of the unconventional union of Tordell nd little Allie:

> The girl caught her breath in a sob and he held her to him again and soothed her. She moved to go but he tightened his arms and would not release her. She grew chilled. He spoke to her and stroked her body until it was warm again. She stretched one arm across his chest and he smoothed her hair gently. She lay quiet. He was thirsty for her closeness. He was afraid to loosen her, for fear a wedge of darkness would come between them. He held her desperately until the sun had dropped in a copper disc among the lily pads; and he was comforted.

t may be taken as a fair sample.

Red Sky in the Morning, by R. P. Tristram Coffin, is, roughly, the ame type of novel as *Golden Apples,* though the actual narration is not so ell controlled and is somewhat more pretentious. Will Prince, the boy ero, is a true son of Maine, descended from a long line of skippers who ave left a fine house overlooking a bay. But Will doesn't live in the big ouse, because his father is so jealous of Will's virtuous mother that he has etired with his family to an island, where he catches lobsters for a liveli-ood. As a result of the death of one of her two children, Mrs. Prince takes er other son to live with an uncle in the big house, where, despite poverty, e can grow up to be a gentleman as befits him. But another uncle, Rupert rince, an arrogant and sensual man and a popular writer, appears on the cene; there being no other lady about, Uncle Rupert makes eyes at Mrs.

Prince, his sister-in-law, and Will, motivated by a recollection of his father's jealousy and a premature reading of Shakespeare's *Hamlet,* murders the uncle while the two are out in the uncle's boat in a squall. Will, of course, gets drowned too, but when they find his body two weeks later he looks "as if he hadn't minded at all." The story also involves something of the technique of lobstering, descriptions of Maine landscape, and an analysis of the boy's sexual development. The following quotation may be taken as an example of the novelist's psychological penetration:

> The business of his body had cleared up. He knew all about men and women. It didn't worry him any more. He didn't have to think of it all as a joke to keep his mind from being hurt by it. His mind did not run on it any more. He knew it was mighty important. The most important thing of all, maybe. One of the reasons why he wanted to get to Dartmouth [Dartmouth College] was the chance to get ahead fast enough so he could get married and make use of what he knew. Get ahead and make a living. Get married. And he was sure he'd pick out a woman he wouldn't have to twit with looking other men's way. No one who would want a second man for his body's sake.

The author's pattering and patronizing style may have been adopted because he is writing about a boy.

Brothers Three, by John M. Oskison, is different from either of the preceding novels, fuller, more earnest in impulse, more substantial in subject and detail; and it is moderately successful. I am assured by a historian who has devoted years to the study of the Southwest that *Brothers Three* is a serious and important document of Oklahoma life. The novel is the story of three brothers, part Cherokee, born in pioneer Oklahoma in the late 19th century. Their father and mother, the Odells, have a passion for land, and not for speculation in land. The Odell homestead, representing a beautifully balanced agricultural economy, prospers, and the Odells are rich. The three sons, all of whom respect enormously their father and his program, are, nevertheless, unable to follow his pattern. One son, Timmy, loves trading, the new-fangled automobile, and town life; he becomes a store keeper. Another, Sam, loves cattle and the life of the range, and becomes a rancher and speculator in cattle. The third, Henry, goes to college, becomes a successful writer, and lives in New York. But the homestead is kept together

y May, Timmy's wife, who attempts to maintain the establishment along he lines defined by old Odell. This homestead is the focus for the lives of the ons and their families, the point where the numerous lines of their lives ntersect. In the face of a changing economic and social situation each of the ons tries in his way to enlarge, and then to resuscitate, the joint family ortune, which, because of the feeling of family solidarity, has never been ivided: Timothy by commerce, Sam by cattle speculation and mine peculation, Henry on the stock exchange. And all fail, recognizing at last nat May with her devotion, her common sense, and her feeling for the land nd its treatment has been wiser than they.

> "It all comes to this," Henry said after a silence. "The Farm's a living organism. It's on starvation rations just now, but we've got to do better by it. It's nourished by the lives that are fed into it. If they're clean and sane and competent, like Pa's and Ma's were, the Farm will flourish. If not—"

The story is quite long, and the ramifications very complicated, but Ir. Oskison manages with considerable skill to keep an adequate subrdination to his theme and to maintain a sense of progression and susense in the actual handling of the theme. It may be that he is too insistnt on the theme, too content with mechanical presentation of its details, ut he does not commit himself to the theme as a panacea; he is making a ecord.

This book is better than the sum of its parts. Mr. Oskison is almost onstantly awkward in the actual writing, and when not awkward, flat or entimental; the dialogue is far from expert; and his powers of observation nd of dramatic detail are never impressive. But he does manifest a very trong structural sense that keeps the narrative, as such, in order, and nables him to handle material of considerable complication.

H. L. Davis won the Harper Prize Novel Contest for 1935 with *Honey n the Horn;* and the novel, not without a great deal more justification than usual in such cases, has been extravagantly praised. It has been somehat flatteringly ranked with *Huckleberry Finn* and somewhat less flatterngly ranked with *Anthony Adverse.* But it is a thoroughly sound book, ery complete within its intention; and it will probably survive, not only ne season of its publication and its blurbs, but many more seasons as well.

The story itself is innocent and romantic enough. The boy Clay is a friendless waif on an Oregon ranch owned by an eccentric with "a great swad of intellectual interests like writing and inventing and experimenting" and no interest in managing his practical affairs. After getting a price on his head by being tricked into assisting a jail-break, Clay becomes a vagabond in the Oregon back-country, falling in with a horse-trader, working as a hop-picker, camping in the woods, wandering with trains of settlers, killing a man, and at last happily meeting again his own true love, the daughter of the no-good horse-trader. The two, Clay and Luce, are left with another train of settlers who are fleeing a bad season. Luce says to Clay, who is about to take the teams of the train across a dangerous slide:

> 'You won't get hurt,' she said, strong and confident. 'If you do, I'll take the wagons down in your place. Go on, show those bush-settlers that our men know how to handle horses.'

And the reader knows that they are immortal, perfectly at home, and happy in their world.

Clay and Luce are simple, but well-explored characters whose story is complete enough and well enough sustained to center the book, to keep it from giving the impression of random picaresque adventure, or a mere gallery of pioneer types, or a Baedeker of Oregon back-country. However successfully the main characters are delineated, it is not the interest in their psychology that gives the book its very considerable specific gravity. What, more than any other single item, guarantees this quality is the fact that Mr. Davis has been able to assimilate for a single effect, and with a minimum of arbitrary exposition, the central story, the supporting portraits, the countryside, the various pioneering impulses, and the routine of life.

I should say that Mr. Davis possesses a sensibility that functions within its limits as the sensibility of a novelist should: concretely, objectively, and with no obsession to make a novel "important" except by its virtues as a novel. (Which may be the best way to make a novel important after all.) Mr. Davis obviously owns a great fund of information of the precise sort that is most valuable for a novelist: what the kind of people he is writing about looked like, what they thought, how they talked, what they ate and wore. It also appears, though less obviously, that he owns another kind of information, the kind that is more properly historical. But he can com-

bine these two types of information without strain, without plastering on ayers of folklore and folkways, without contriving illustrative situations, vithout manufacturing a "plot" to give a "cross section" of "society," and vithout riding a thesis—superficialities which have in varying degrees been haracteristic of the work of a large number of regional and historical nov- lists, such as Coffin, Stribling, Rawlings, Evelyn Scott. Mr. Davis is writing bout a "region" and about a "society," but the reader is never reminded f that fact, for Mr. Davis is not self-conscious and never forgets that he s writing about people, Clay, Luce, and the numerous others, and not bout some abstractions. The society Mr. Davis is writing about is a society n the loose, adventurers, derelicts, home-loving men without homes, *aqueros* and sheep-herders, the rag-tag-and-bobtail of a late frontier. He as a point of view about this society, that is, a theme if you will: an ptimism, a confidence that this shaking down of society may be good for , and that something valuable and vital is shaped for survival. But this erves as a conditioning basis of the book, the climate of the book, rather nan as a thesis to be substantiated. For instance, compare the conclusion f Mr. Oskison's novel, already quoted, with the conclusion, also quoted, f *Honey in the Horn*. Mr. Oskison feels impelled to make a statement bout the farm, etc.; Mr. Davis leaves, more subtly and more resonantly, feeling about Clay and Luce and, by consequence, about a great many ther matters.

Further, Mr. Davis has done much to develop a style that is suitable o his special purposes and individuality. As it stands now it is thoroughly erviceable, humorous or informal, and quite flexible; for Mr. Davis under- kes more than one kind of effect. Probably the strongest affiliation is ith the style of Mark Twain, especially in so far as the underlying rhythms nd the type of characteristic simile are concerned. But Mr. Davis is not rimarily a humorist; humor is simply the basic way in which he asserts s objectivity and his control of his material. In fact, when he is most lf-consciously humorous, when he descends to gag-making for the sake gag-making, his performance is weakest. But Mr. Davis is one of the w novelists who do not seem to regard writing as simply a tedious adjunct the business of constructing a novel. That fact may promise as much for s final performance as any other quality of *Honey in the Horn*.

Beside *Honey in the Horn,* Horatio Colony's *Free Forester* seems like a historical exercise. But the comparison is unfair, for Mr. Colony has handled his story of the Kentucky frontier with a fair degree of skill in structure and with a style that is pleasant and readable. The writing of the novel was probably motivated primarily by an appetite for the picturesque, although the leading character is more complicated, and is developed with more cunning, than is usual in costume pieces. The chief novelty and piquancy this book offers is an emphasis on the sex life of the Indian fighters, a matter which Mr. Colony invests with more finesse and illicit fascination than is ordinary in frontier fiction. I have said that it is unfair to compare this book with *Honey in the Horn* just as it is unfair to compare it with *The Invasion* by Janet Lewis or *The Great Meadow* by Elizabeth Madox Roberts; but I may add that it is considerably more satisfactory than *Golden Apples* or *Red Sky in the Morning.*

The Wind Blew West, by Edwin Lanham, is, like *Free Forester* and *Honey in the Horn,* a novel about frontier life. It is the Texas frontier of 1875, with the chief excitement derived from a proposed railroad and Indian raids. Despite a fairly mechanical plot, the stodginess of some of the writing and the lack of precision in the characterization of most of the actors, the book is not to be dismissed. Something positively good remains, especially in the treatment of the Arkansas farmer who emigrates to Texas and in the section dealing with the trial of the Indians. In those sections Mr. Lanham demonstrates that he can handle character and can manage an effective style. Aside from the flaws which are, simply, the indication of lack of experience (this, I believe, is a first novel), the novel suffers from an error in judgment in its conception: it sets out, rather too self-consciously, to give a historical cross-section, to be, as it were, truly "regional" and "indigenous"; and to fulfil this program the writer has to scatter his energies so much that he cannot concentrate on the real definition of his people.

The Body the Earth may well be Paul Green's most substantial work thus far. It is, as the cover proclaims, the story of a "sharecropper's thirst for love and power," the story, from childhood to defeat and death, of Alvin Barnes, who struggled to own land and raise himself from his class and its fatalism or shiftlessness. His extraordinary ambition, energy, and intel-

ligence bring him success for a time, and enable him to marry a girl who s beautiful and who loves him, but who cannot understand his centrality of purpose and his passion for the land. In a fit of jealous rage, Alvin maims philandering fellow from town who had paid some attention to his wife, and is sentenced to the chain gang. His wife divorces him; the chain gang and disappointment destroy his spirit and his health; his land is lost through debt. After his parole he marries a girl who has loved him for years, but who, despite her devotion, now cannot save him. Sunk back into the wandering routine of his class, more and more hopeless, he at last dies of tuberculosis.

Strangely enough, the equipment that Mr. Green brings to bear on his material is not the equipment of a dramatist. It is not merely a matter of structure; the novel is a chronicle covering many years. It is the crudity of exposition, the lack of sharpness in most of the scenes, the weakness of climax in scenes, and the diffuseness and sometimes monotony of the dialogue. The dialogue has a certain tonelessness in its recording, a flatness of rhythm, although Mr. Green has been conscientious enough, perhaps too conscientious at times, in his attempt to convey dialectal peculiarities. The first half of the book is slow in development; deficient in pungency of detail, though conscientious again in its routine realism; and too unvaried in its progression toward the success of Alvin Barnes. But with the courtship of Ethel, the first wife, the novel begins to attain an adequate momentum. From the time of the marriage the structural problems are solved firmly and with a sound judgment for ordonnance and emphasis. It is clear from the present book that Mr. Green has little power or instinct for concentrated effects; he depends on the slow routine of accumulation, the building up of material, not provocative or interesting in itself, that can be related to his objective. This quality carries as a corollary the fact that the novel presents only one real character, and a character that is defined, as it were, from the outside inward, rather than from the inside outward, spontaneously and organically. The method, which is apparently the only method possible for Mr. Green, is one that places certain difficulties, especially in the early stages of a book, in the way of the reader's appreciation. But Mr. Green overcomes these difficulties, and Alvin Barnes emerges finally in full form, solidly, if awkwardly. As Mr. Green nears his conclusion the very

quality of the style itself quickens and improves. The section dealing with the chain gang is done with great effectiveness, and the restrained summary of Alvin's life after his parole, and of his illness and death, is extremely moving.

This Body the Earth inevitably reminds the reader of two of Hardy's novels, *Return of the Native* and *Jude the Obscure*. It is as though Mr. Green had taken the central motive of each of these books, combined them, and changed the locale of operation. Alvin, like Clym Yeobright, has a passionate attachment to the earth, although an attachment more practical and less metaphysical than that of Clym; and he has a wife who loves him but who, like Eustacia Vye, is always straining for another kind of life with excitement and gaiety. Further, Alvin, like Jude, is an ignorant and underprivileged man who, possessed of enormous and tragic determination and unusual intelligence, struggles to raise himself from his class; and the relation of Jude to his two wives and that of Alvin to Ivy and Ethel are contrived along the same general pattern. The motivation of *This Body the Earth* is simpler in all respects than the motivation of either of the novels by Hardy, for, as I have remarked above, Mr. Green assimilates material to his leading idea with considerable difficulty; that is, Mr. Green generally works by assembling data, Hardy by trying to infuse data with a poetic coherence. The effect of the last part of *This Body the Earth* is imitated directly from the concluding part of *Jude the Obscure;* but, I believe, this imitation is conducted along perfectly legitimate lines and that it grows normally out of the preceding material. It is not simply a make-shift or a *tour de force;* and it does much to concentrate the power of the novel.

There is one more aspect of this novel worth comment even in a review of this limited scope. The critical element in it is strongly emphasized. It might be said that Alvin is not only directly defeated by the injustice of the economic system and by the stupidity of courts and the brutality of the penal system; the proposition might be indirectly extended by saying that Ethel might have proved a good wife, instead of the occasion of his disaster, if she had not been corrupted by the lures of pleasure and excitement that had reached even to her from the metropolitan world. This may be extending Mr. Green's sociological idea farther than he intended; but in any case it permeates the book, and rightly so, for the book could not

xist without it. Several times Mr. Green is, however, inept in the means e employs to relate the idea to actual story. The most decisive instance f this is the interpolated scene in the office of an Eastern firm that holds he mortgages on the plantation from which Alvin is trying to buy his land:

> "Yes, fix up the pepers. We waste too much time on these trifling matters."
>
> "Still, there's forty percent in it—a right good profit."
>
> "Heh-heh-heh!" laughs Pince-nez. "Is that the best you can figure for our stockholders?"
>
> And Wet-behind-the ears grovels in abject humility before the great man's cunning, the while he wonders which side of the boss man's throat he'd better cut first.

he presentation of the idea could be handled with more subtlety and with more precise relation to the matter in hand. There should be more effective nethods for Mr. Green to use to convey to the reader the weight of anony- nous corruption which bears upon the "trifling matters" of Alvin's destiny. nd there should be a better way for Mr. Green to educate the boy Alvin han by the introduction of the old man who is writing the great "work" on conomics and society—a feeble and conventional characterization.

But Mr. Green's essential success in the handling of the economic and ociological aspect of his theme emerges more emphatically after the read- ng of a book like Grace Lumpkin's *A Sign for Cain*. This is a proletarian ovel, a thing which, properly speaking, *This Body the Earth* is not. Miss umpkin may have written a good piece of propaganda; I am not prepared o deny that, if by good propaganda is meant merely an accurate illustration f an abstract thesis; and that may have been her sole intention. In any ase, assuming the success of her propaganda, it remains almost her sole chievement. But is her propaganda successful, if, after all, the function of ropaganda is to persuade the uninitiated rather than to lull and flatter the eliever in the sanctity of his convictions? A novel is good propaganda in ny ultimate sense, and, for that matter, a good novel, only in so far as it can ersuade the reader into a concern for the humanity and worth of the char- cters involved. But this view, on reflection, may not be cynical enough, nd the writer of propaganda may not be interested in ultimate, but in

short-range effects; that is, in the demonstration of thesis with the minimum of emphasis on the human complication.

Grace Lumpkin is not interested in long-range effects. She sets out, much after the manner of T. S. Stribling though without his historical interest, to give a cross-section of a Southern community: the aging Colonel, once a silver-tongued orator, but now suffering, how ironically, from cancer of the mouth; his son, an Episcopal clergyman; another son, a waster and a drunkard; his daughter, who is a novelist with fashionable smartness and sentimentality; a sister, the rich widow of the Colonel's old political enemy, a new man who had risen during Reconstruction; the hero, a gigantic and dignified negro who, having been North to work in the factories and become a Communist agitator, is now back home to see his dying mother and organize the share-croppers; the radical editor of the small-town paper; the daughter of the sheriff, a girl who is trying to make her way as a seducer and a writer of feature articles. The drunkard murders his rich aunt because she will give him no more money; the negro Communist is arrested, accused of rape, and shot in his cell by the drunkard, who has been whipped up to the heroic act by some of the leading citizens; but the faithful admirers of the dead organizer plan to stage a demonstration at the funeral to show their determination. That is, although the present case is lost, the proletariat, according to the formula of Mike Gold, are undaunted, and "pledge themselves to continue the struggle."

The book is awkwardly constructed in the early sections, which are full of the chatty expositions of relations of the characters and of ideas; but toward the middle a good deal of detective-story suspense is generated and maintained for the remainder of the story. The style is undistinguished, the characterization incomplete and predictable. It is no better or worse than a journalistic, readable book for an idle hour—*The Clansman* or *The Leopard's Spots* turned inside out and renovated with sociological decorations. It will probably be called "important," though its importance, it seems to me, lies in the indications that the writer has certain talents which might fructify if she could find a more serious and less arbitrary way to relate her theme and materials. But *A Sign for Cain* does not leave the impression of mere faddishness, as does *Pier 17*, a novel written by a college

rofessor, Walter Havighurst, about dock strikes on the West Coast. A oung seaman who wants to be a poet is the central character.

From the Kingdom of Necessity, an autobiographical novel by Isidor chneider, is, as the conclusion testifies, a proletarian piece:

> He has set out from the kingdom of necessity; he has found a way out, the escape from his class, only to find that, outside, he was homeless. He was to learn that no one enters the kingdom of freedom alone. He would return to his class. With it, he would march, taking his place in the advancing lines, in the irrestible movement of the masses of mankind from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of Freedom.

he book gives the childhood of the hero in Poland and in the New York lums, the struggle for education and for a literary career, the gradual isillusionment with liberalism, the sexual history and the idyllic love tory. It is an extremely interesting book, which may, in addition, have a ertain documentary value. But the performance is uneven, the unevenness eing, to a large extent, the result of the difficulties proposed by the autoiographical impulse. The author makes a desperate to-do to be objective bout his hero, of whom, obviously, he does not think ill. But the reader nay not have the conviction about this central character that he would ave about the reality of a character of good straight fiction; somehow, the uthor does not seem able to lay hands on the mainspring of the hero's eing. Mr. Schneider has not solved the problem that Mr. Wolfe, despite is superior equipment, did not solve in *Of Time and the River*. On the ntellectual side of the autobiography, the novel is not to be compared with *he Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* or with *The Education of Henry Adams*. Mr. Schneider, quite rightly, does not attempt to reduce he question to an astract argument, for he is enough of a poet and novelist t least to know that that is not the way such things work out—it is only he way they are presented; he is not able to devise a properly dramatic reatment, a treatment that would make the intellectual aspect of the novel ppear organic and integral. Further, the lyrical and ostentatiously zestful ove story is probably the weakest part of the novel. What is fundamentally ngrossing is the large gallery of portraits; here Mr. Schneider shows that e has the novelist's eye for detail, can write briskly and easily in several eins, and knows what people are like. Certainly, *From the Kingdom of*

Necessity is one of the few good books of the season; and Grace Lumpkin, if and when she should decide to write another proletarian novel, might do well to inspect this book, which, although it does not solve the problem of theme and subject, at least does not foster journalistic simplification.

South, by Frederick Wight, is neither a regional nor a proletarian novel; but it makes a mild bid for attention from unspeculative members of both camps. A young painter from the North and his beautiful wife come to a Southern resort, which also happens to be a center of textile manufacture. There the young couple get acquainted with decaying Southern aristocrats, Yankee millionaires, and mill hands and strike leaders. Rather ingeniously the author has managed to contrive his plot so that the proper, and somewhat predictable, types of Southern citizens appear. In addition, the citizenry is shown in more or less characteristic action: one decayed young aristocrat, a very good fellow, has a love affair with the painter's wife; the river provides a first-rate flood that breaks the levee; the cotton mills have a strike; the American wife of a French nobleman tries to seduce the painter; and there is a revival in town. The total action is well lubricated with corn whisky.

The novel is written from the point of view of a tourist, who, observing the strange kaleidoscope with admirable detachment, even when his wife falls in love with the decayed aristocrat, tries to arrive at a definition of the spiritual core of the South. Since the tourist is a mystic as well as a painter, the definition may not appear highly instructive to all readers. Such a recalcitrant reader may be inclined to believe that Mr. Wight has seized with too much avidity on the picturesque and sensational elements, schematized them too easily and neatly, and then refused, being a mystic, to resolve the issues raised. The book is really attempting to carry two burdens, or is operating on two impulses, which are not always coördinated except by severe strain: the presentation of the tourist's South and the story of the relation of the husband and wife.

Mr. Wight appears to be strangely influenced by Proust, both in style and method. But Proust's work was developed from a central view of the world that provided him with a structure; Mr. Wight's mysticism gives no such support here. Consequently, *South* too frequently carries an excess of mannerism. Mr. Wight, however, has a definite talent for narration; if

his talent could be stripped of the mannerism and could discover a congenial and less confused theme, the writer might do more than produce what , after all, merely an interesting book.

FIVE POETS

F. Cudworth Flint

In the February, 1931, issue of *Poetry,* devoted to the works of the "Objectivists," Louis Zukovsky focused light on the program and intention of this group of American poets as follows: "An Objective: (Optics)—The lens bringing the rays from an objective to a focus. (Military use)—That which is aimed at (Use extended to poetry)—Desire for what is objectively perfect, inextricably the direction of historic and contemporary particulars." I do not know whether Dr. Williams would be willing to acknowledge himself a member of anything so un-individual as a group; but his affinities lie with the Objectivist group. His contribution to the Objectivist issue of *Poetry,* his publication of his *Collected Poems, 1921-1931,* through the Objectivist Press, and the characteristics of his poetry, all demonstrate this.

Superficially, it may seem that Objectivism is merely a new title for Imagism. It is true that the Objectivists would not be where they are, had they not fallen heirs to the technique and accomplishment of the Imagists. Williams' poems exhibit the same intentness of observation, the same determination to evoke the poem from the concrete object or scene, the same removal of interpretations from the core to the circumference of the poem,

An Early Martyr and Other Poems, by William Carlos Williams. *Fire Testament,* by Willard Maas. *Mediterranean and Other Poems,* by Allen Tate. *Minute Particulars,* by John Peale Bishop. *Thirty-six Poems,* by Robert Penn Warren. All published in limited edition by The Alcestis Press: New York. $7.50 *each.*

e same limitation of poems to relatively small compass, not going beyond hat can be supported by reference to a single scene or object, and the me use of short lines avoiding metrical rhythm and suggesting speech ythms stripped and moulded to their place in the poem, that we find in e poetry, for example, of the Imagist, H. D. But the differences are no less riking. Imagism, partly because of its birth in a decade in which the arts d artists were increasingly specialized and remote from the main tenden-es of life and thought in their day, and partly because of the particular terests of so prominent a practitioner of Imagism as H. D., favored the mote, the classical, the fastidious, in its selection of images; and where Imagist poem went beyond the image, it usually embraced only such notions as concern the individual, apart from his contacts with other man beings. The chief exception to this is the Imagist poem of love, hich, inheriting often a Romantic tinge, therefore only seems to embody social relationship: Romantic love, since it gives all and takes nothing, really a quite solitary attitude. The Objectivists, unlike the Imagists, re quite contemporary, unfastidious, and inclusive in their selections of ages. Williams in his new volume writes with fresh incisiveness, as vays, about trees, flowers, and the sea: but he also writes addresses

TO A MEXICAN PIG-BANK

and a small
flock
of clay
sheep—

1

TO A POOR OLD WOMAN

munching a plum on
the street a paper bag
of them in her hand.

d in another respect the Objectivists go beyond the Imagists. Both by ir choice of subjects and by the implications which are allowed to appear m the image, the Objectivists suggest the direction of the streams of ects, facts, situations, incidents—the tendency in things which we call

history. And by the sequences and juxtapositions of images in their poems and by the cadences of their phrases, they suggest often their own judgment on history. An emphatic example of such an expansion of an image into a perception of a tendency, with its accompanying judgment, is this:

ITEM

This, with a face
like a mashed blood-orange
that suddenly

would get eyes
and look up and scream
War! War!

clutching her
thick, ragged coat
A piece of hat

broken shoes
War! War!
stumbling for dread

at the young men
who with their gun-butts
shove her

sprawling—
a note
at the foot of the page.

The title poem, "An Early Martyr," resembles "Item" in that it expands a scene (or rather, an incident) until it becomes a comment on civilization—a comment as extended as the reader's courage or imagination will carry it.

If a poem repays a reader for efforts bestowed on its reading; if a reader els that in some degree he has been in contact with an operative energy hen he has read a poem, the explanation is that the poem itself is con- ituted of contrasted forces so held in balance as to form valuable tensions. [tem" will serve as well as another poem to exemplify what some of the nsions characteristic of Williams' poetry are. In the first place, the foun- ation of the poem—the image—while not necessarily static or unchanged roughout a poem, nevertheless by requiring from the reader a steady tentness for its apprehension, tends to retard the forward movement of e poem. If the image does expand or proliferate or otherwise transform self, it does so in an atmosphere of fixed scrutiny. This atmosphere is the irit or mode of existence of Imagist verse. On the other hand, as a bal- ncing force to create the tension, the colloquial movement of Williams' rse propels the reader onward. His diction sometimes actually puts skids der the reader, sending him hurtling breathlessly forward—an effect hich I think "Item" illustrates.

This balance between fixity and movement is complicated in a score ways by the typographical arrangement of Williams' poems on the page. is high time we admitted frankly that poetry, although originally and r centuries no doubt an art in time like music, has been so vitally affected r its long association with print, that certain formal arrangements of a em on a page which are only clumsily or sketchily translatable into vocal fects, may be essential to the complete being of the poem. Williams usually unterpoints his syntactical and his line groupings of words against each her, so that the pauses suggested by each system in isolation are lightened r the presence of the contrasted system. The result is naturally to speed e reader's progress. On the other hand the frequent division of his poems o stanzas—he favors two-, three-, and four-line stanzas—acts as a brake ainst speeding. In some poems, such as "The Wind Increases," the poem sprinkled down the page with a continual variation in the indentation of e lines; and many of these consist but of a single word. This scattering nters attention on single words as they pass, as if each were a grain of ld to be pondered carefully before being allowed to slip by. Hence, the tic element in the poem seems strengthened at the expense of the namic. Yet the total effect of such a spacing often suggests a possibily

wavering but unintermitted descent of the poem, falling like rain from top to bottom of the page. ("Rain" in *Collected Poems* exhibits precisely this effect.) So here, too, the tension between the impulse to pause and the impulse to move forward, is visibly reflected in the typography.

Another tension in Williams' poetry has been pointed out already by Wallace Stevens in his pithy preface to the *Collected Poems*. Stevens says that Williams has a sentimental side, from which he is continually escaping for salvation to the anti-poetic. And yet the relation is not merely an escape: the sentimental and the anti-poetic, as Stevens says, fecundate each other. The word "sentimental" has acquired so opprobrious a sense in literary discussion that some other word, like "idealizing" or "spontaneous" or "child-like," or best, a mixture of all three in mild solution, might run less risk of misleading the casual reader. In "Item" this tension is represented; there is a "sentimental" protest against callousness, balanced by stress on anti-poetic details which might seem to lessen the offense of callousness by dividing the reader's attention. And, as often in Williams, these contrasted elements are not distributed simply, as where one is assigned to one object or phrase in the poem and the other to another. The old woman is the protest against war and the soldiers shoving her with their gun-butts are anti-poetic, if one views the scene from the curbstone; if one views the scene from among the marching ranks, the soldiers going to their fate are themselves a protest against that fate, and the old woman becomes an anti-poetic nuisance. Of course, neither point of view should be adopted in isolation; I am not umpiring between opposite interpretations, but analysing a complex situation made up of these and other less distinct attitudes which when stated separately are so inadequate as to be false. To any who wish to study further the multiple relations between the sentimental and the anti-poetic, I recommend "The Dead Baby": for example,

Sweep the house clean
    here is one who has gone up
    (though problematically)
to heaven, blindly
    by force of the facts—
a clean sweep
    is one way of expressing it—

Many of the characteristics of *Collected Poems* are repeated in the ew volume. There is the same variety of substance in the poems, which ange all the way from those which concentrate solely on the image, like To a Mexican Pig-bank," to those in which the core of the poem is an lea, and the imagery, though still sharply and concisely expressed, is ancil- ry; such a poem is "Genesis." A number of these poems, like some in the arlier volume, concentrate their application or achieve the greatest expan- on of the image in the last line or two; "Item" illustrates this characteris- c. And Dr. Williams' corduroy wit still manifests itself, as in "A Poem for orman Macleod":

> The revolution
> is accomplished
> noble has been
> changed to no bull

The new collection differs from the earlier in that the later book is ss scintillant than the former one; it contains fewer poems in which bright agments of imagery now scatter at random and now in part combine to nt at or half reveal a pattern which expresses the theme of the poem. t Is a Living Coral" and "Primavera" in the earlier book are such poems. here is little like them in the later book; for the imagery of "Young omance" or of "An Elegy for D. H. Lawrence" suggests, not a kaleido- ope, but a cord of two or three strands, each of which twists recurrently to view. In a word, *An Early Martyr* is a less striking collection than the 921-1931 book—something which is only natural, for the other collection as made up of the best parts of several books published earlier. I do not ink, however, that there is any lessening of Dr. Williams' quality. He erely disports himself less, spreads himself less; he pursues his course w more collectedly.

The quality of the poem in this volume seems to me fairly even. A few, ch as "Proletarian Portrait" and "Locust Tree in Flower," are merely tes for poems to be constructed by the reader. I do not care so much for e poems, such as "The Early Martyr" and "The Raper from Passenack," hich spring from an event, as I do for those which spring from a scene or ject. The latter seem to me more individual; though in the 1921-1931 lume, "A Morning Imagination of Russia," based on what Dr. Williams

imagines it must feel like to be a Russian in the Soviet dispensation, is an extraordinary *tour de force,* in spite of its relatively unconcrete basis. In the newer volume, "An Elegy for D. H. Lawrence" is particularly fresh and lovely; the interwoven strands of imagery are drawn from scenes through which Lawrence moved and from the imagery of his poetry. In general, Williams lives up to his own characterization in "The Wind Increases" of the poet:

> Good Christ what is
> a poet—if any
> exists?
>
> a man
> whose words will
> bite
> their way
> home—being actual
> having the form
> of motion

Willard Maas, in his *Fire Testament,* includes "Flowers and Decorations, a Frieze for William Carlos Williams," a poem which does capture the bright ornament of some of the earlier Williams. But fundamentally, Mr. Maas is a totally different sort of poet. The basis of his poetry is not imagistic, but musical. On a superficial reading, this might be questioned; the book is full of visual symbolism of color, fire, and light, suggesting that Maas' "great bird" with

> . . . golden beak
> silver-scaled
> his legs
> his gilded feet and
> emerald-clawed

and his

> white unicorn
> scarlet
> his mane his hooves of ebony

lightly tracking the sand
his horn of shining pearl

the long introductory poem, "Inventory Before Dawn," have come from n ethereal world invented by Blake. The influence of Blake is also sug-ested by the fact that Professor S. Foster Damon, the well known Blake xpositor of Brown University, has furnished Maas with an explanatory nd commendatory introduction. It is to this combination of Blakian sym-olism and an essentially musical structure that the merits and what are my opinion the defects of these poems are due.

From Blake systematized by Damon, or elsewhere, Mr. Maas has quired the idea of shaping the contents of his book so as to illustrate a hematic sequence of themes and symbols, with a resulting sense of unity nd development conveyed to one who reads the whole series of poems con-cutively. Professor Damon's introduction defines for us this sequence:

> The creative act occurs when the workaday consciousness is wedded to the subliminal self. This is the point which Willard Maas selects for the locus of his poems.
>
> The meeting of conscious and unconscious in the creative act is not peculiar to aesthetic production: it also occurs at the moment of love, and again on the verge of sleep. For that reason, the first section of the introductory 'Inventory Before Dawn' describes a sleepless night in which the protean figures finally reveal the naked desire within them. But soon the poet attains the cleanliness of full consummation. As the poems progress, the awareness of the modern city surrounds the ecstasy, but the ecstasy suffuses the objective reality, and the book ends with chants calling upon youth to rise in brotherhood and remake the world.

may add that to balance the long introductory poem, the book appro-iately ends with an "Accolade to the Sun," concluding with the summar-ng line

flame for our thoughts, fire for our singing.

"*Flame* for our thoughts, fire for our *singing*"—it is precisely this nguage which makes me dissent from the later passage in the Introduc-n in which Professor Damon states that "The texture of each poem is a ktaposition of unrelated pictures, each glowing with subliminal light. One

might name the method '*pointilliste* Imagism.' The verbal surfaces dance with an interplay and flux of momentary visions which vibrate in the mind's eye, producing a unity of pure deliciousness." There is, certainly, a good deal of "subliminal light," but the images are not those of Imagisim, "*pointilliste*" or not: they are the images of program music. The book begins with Stravinsky, modulates into Debussy, and ends with Stravinsky again. Compare this poem from Williams' book:

FLOWERS BY THE SEA

When over the flowery, sharp pasture's
edge, unseen, the salt ocean

lifts its form—chickory and daisies
tied-released seem hardly flowers alone

but color and the movement—or the shape
perhaps—of restlessness, whereas

the sea is circled and sways
peacefully upon its plantlike stem

with this by Maas:

SEASCAPE WITH FIGURES

over us the round sky
brightness of clouds

day is wide with light
tall fern-tentacles
green fish-cucumbers
sea-urchins rose-purple

the fitful gull
calls to the sun

believe o god believe
the blueness of the day
stillness of the water

my heart at her lips
our feet lead
where the hour is waking

have deliberately chosen a poem from Maas in which the imagistic element, nveyed by the title and the fourth, fifth, and sixth lines, is more con- icuous than usual. Yet it must be evident on even a cursory reading that e imagism continually runs off into glowing abstraction: "brightness of ouds" rather than, say, "sun-filled clouds"; "day is wide with light"; lueness of the day"; "stillness of the water"; and finally, our feet lead— here? "where the hour is waking." And in the center of the poem, the rongly metrical line, "calls to the sun," is followed by the purely musical- notive line "believe o god believe." Professor Damon does, I must in fair- ss add, go on to say, "It is visual music"; but the context shows that he links of the poems as composed of pictures succeeding one another like e notes or themes of music; whereas I contend that images rise only fit- lly to the surface of the poems and soon disappear again. They are thrown by the fundamental musical impulse; it is this which prolongs the poems their end. Poetry should be classified according to its basis, not its rfaces.

Another point, though a minor one: I think Professor Damon mis- ates himself, probably in an effort to be concise, when he says that "The xture of each poem is a juxtaposition of unrelated pictures . . ." I cannot id any poem in which the pictures are unrelated, although in some the lation seems to be that of the symbols in an apocalypse—a congruity not logic. Many of the poems, especially the short love-and-moonlit-land- ape lyrics in the middle of the book, are as much of a piece in their imagery a poem well could be. And the disjunction in the imagery in the first ction of "Inventory Before Dawn" turns out to be an alternation of two reams of imagery—the images in the one stream related to one another their derivation from the heroic, ideal, racial memories of the "protean" eper; the images in the other stream, by their derivation from a sordid frustrated daily individual experience.

Of the longer poems, "Inventory Before Dawn" is the better. Maas doubtedly in this soars with his symbolism, and his verse kindles with the

energy of fire and the radiance of light. But by the time the closing "Accolade to the Sun" is reached, the reader's eyes have become blinded with excess of light. For this reason, I was impressed only by one of its least incantatory passages—the regular stanzas forming section IV. In the lyrics of moonlight and love (I do not intend the sickly connotations of the conjunction—the phrase is purely a convenient label), there is considerable sublety of music. Indeed, many of these poems differ from one another, not in substance, but in modulations of cadence, and shiftings of sound and silence, like some muted colloquy conducted the night long by softly stirred trees and a brook half asleep. But, like such a colloquy, these lyrics in sequence grow monotonous; the material in them is too much reiterated. The poems which "call upon youth to rise in brotherhood and remake the world" are uneven in merit; for example, "Dream at Noonday" is a striking and originally conceived protest against mechanization; but "City," the next poem, seems to me factitious; it tries to generate a utopia out of mention of a dynamo and an enthusiastic rhythm. And all through the book, Mr. Maas has not escaped the dangers to which Blake and music together betray him. At moments of intensity, his language wanders off into the illimitable; and goodness in poetry depends upon the recognition of limits—of one kind or another. Of course, his melodies limit him, but they are not strong enough by themselves, being not so embodied as the melodies of music, to support such an ending, even to a good poem, as "winds of the years thunder through the boughs of silence." And the book is altogether too full of such nebulousness—whether bright or dim—as "love somewhere is unfolding"; "Brotherhood eternal"; "bright heart-symbols"; and "Call back the last song from the rim of the world."

However, in poems such as "First Snow," "Sunlight on Ice," "Moonlight over Juniper," and "Melody for a Swan Song," Maas demonstrates a variety of resource and a marriage of intention, word, and cadence, that justify the expectation that he may become an important voice in America—provided he eschews his tendency to fly off at a tangent into abstraction. At present, his poems in sequence are a little too much like a great fire: they amaze the reader more than they enlighten him.

Allen Tate's poetry might furnish Mr. Maas with an antidote to excess of imaginative fluidity; for Mr. Tate's verse is eminently solid and com-

act. Indeed, so concentrated is it that it is almost insoluble to analysis, o far as its content is concerned. The critic can point out this or that phrase s ill- or well-expressed; but the subjects of the poems are so completely ncarnated in language determined by a particular habit of mind, existing n a particular civilization, and with a particular heredity and philosophy, hat a given poem seems almost to displace its subject; the subject becomes nerely a signpost to the poem. For this reason, Tate seldom reminds us of ther poets, though some other American poets are beginning to remind us f him.

There are, it is true, certain features of his poetry which appear in nborrowed form also in the work of John Peale Bishop and Robert Penn Varren—poets related to him through ties of regional culture and personal cquaintanceship. For example, all three give explicit evidence that they re working with an awareness of the traditions of English literature. They raw upon the Greek and Latin classics and the Elizabethans—especially hakespeare—for characters, symbols, and phrases. Yet these are not eferences intended merely to substantiate a dignity or to gild a line. When he buzzard, in Mr. Warren's "Pondy Woods" counsels:

> "Nigger, regard the circumstance of breath:
> *Non omnis moriar,* the poet saith."
>
> Pedantic, the bird clacked its grey beak,
> With a Tennessee accent to the classic phrase;

he poet's comment indicates, though it understates, the acclimating of hese sprigs from classic groves. The borrowing always assumes a double alue: to the value derived from its source is added a new value arising from s function in a new context. The borrowing is pedantic only when, as here, umor requires this.

Both Tate and Bishop make use of Aeneas—the former in "The Mediterranean" and "Aeneas in Washington," the latter in "The Burning Wheel." Naturally, the flight of Aeneas has different values in different poems: am concerned here only to point out that it is the flight of Aeneas from roy, rather than his deeds in Latium as progenitor of Rome, which these oets portray. For they, too, are descendants of a culture ravaged by the uperior material power of its enemies. It is a truism nowadays to say that

neither the Union nor slavery was the real issue in the Civil War. An industrialized North, headed toward a dictatorship exercised by capitalistic monopoly, overcame an agricultural South in which the economic spread between the gentry at the top and the slaves at the bottom was held within limits by the fact that both alike lived in largely self-sufficient communities drawing their subsistence from the soil. All this has been ably set forth by Southern writers, and need not be argued here. I am inclined to agree with some Northern commentators on this thesis, who believe that the South contained in itself the seeds of the transformation which had already overtaken the North, and therefore, though at a much slower pace, would in time have become industrialized and monopolistic, even had the Confederacy achieved its independence. But it remains true that the South at the time of the Civil War had so little experienced this tendency, that it felt itself raped by the incursion of an alien, inhuman, barbarous mode of life. Presented suddenly with a vision of what it might, if left in peace, insensibly have become, it was revolted by the contrast of this apparition to what it then was. With the balance of material profits and loss to the South in the violent acceleration of the economic tendencies of modern times consequent to the victory of the North, I am not here concerned. But the situation of the South illustrates again the fact that it may be good for the artist to live after, if not exactly in, a time when the habits and ideals of his own society have been challenged. For victory may have a stupefying effect on the victors; they complacently accept their success as a sufficient guarantee of their ideals. The artists, historians, and philosophers of the defeated group—that is to say, all those whose duty toward their society consists in *seeing* for it—are driven by the compulsion of their convictions and allegiances to examine narrowly their own habits and beliefs, and those of their opponents. They cannot accept so readily the verdict of gunpowder (or, it may be, under other circumstances, the verdict of the ballot or the dividend) without treachery to a way of life which has grown into their bones. No doubt, the first effect of catastrophe is to paralyze the literature of a nation; but once the shock is past, it is no evil for its writers to realize that they must build their habitations out of stones the builders have wantonly rejected. For then they will work carefully; they will avoid waste; and above all, they will not follow the time's fashions. It is the easy compla-

encies of an age which weaken first, and eventually bring down the good long with the bad. From these complacencies, a minority stands a good nance of being exempt.

In such a poem as Tate's "To the Lacedemonians," this self-examination of the minority assumes the form of retrospection of the Civil War; nd in general, Tate, as befits the biographer of Stonewall Jackson and of efferson Davis, is more prone than Bishop or Warren to allude to persons nd events of Southern history. Like his own Aeneas, he remembers:

> That was a time when civilization
> Run by the few fell to the many and
> Crashed to the shout of men, the clank of arms:
> Cold victualling I seized, I hoisted up
> The old man my father upon my back
> In the smoke made by the sea for a new world
> Saving little—a mind imperishable
> If time is, a love of past things tenuous
> As the hesitation of receding love.

o Warren, these bygone events seem to have receded into the coolness of ie past; in "History among the Rocks" he writes:

> There are many ways to die
> Here among the rocks in any weather:
>
> . . . . . .
>
> In these autumn orchards once young men lay dead . . .
> Grey coats, blue coats. Young men on the mountainside
> Clambered, fought. Heels muddied the rocky spring.
> Their reason is hard to guess, remembering
> Blood on their black mustaches in moonlight.
> Their reason is hard to guess and a long time past:
> The apple falls, falling in the quiet night.

ishop is silent about the detailed history of the South, probably because e comes of Connecticut stock; his lineage became Southern after the Civil Var.

But in presenting what history has made of the South today, Bishop the most explicit of the three, in the sense that he paints a picture of man

in his setting of nature, and then assigns the picture to its place in the file of social history, as in his

SOUTHERN PINES

White pine, yellow pine,
The first man fearing the forest
Felled trees, afraid of shadow,
His own shade in the shadow of pinewoods.

Slash pine, loblolly,
The second man wore tarheels,
Slashed pine, gashed pine,
The silent land changed to a sea-charge.

Short leaf, long leaf,
The third man had aching pockets,
Mill town, lumber mill,
And buzzards sailed the piney barrens.

Cut pine, burnt pine,
The fourth man's eyes burned in starvation,
Bone-back cattle, razor-back hogs
Achieve the seedling, end the pinewoods.

Warren, so far as he explicitly uses the South, works through landscape toward theme and atmosphere. The stubborn, rock-strewn, pine-blanketed Kentucky hills, or the menacing black-and-gold river-swamps, embody themselves in the human shapes and situations for which they are the setting. The lean men of the hills resemble the rocks they tread; and the story of Big Jim Todd in "Pondy Woods" is an exhalation of the ominous grotesquerie of the swamp. Of the three, Tate is farthest away from painting. Owing to his philosophic bent, he chiefly presents the South as a community involved in the predicament of modern civilization. This predicament, philosophically expressed, arises, if I interpret Mr. Tate aright, from the glorification of quantity—essentially an attribute of space—at the expense of quality, which is manifested in the particulars produced by time. (It is no accident that Mr. Bishop's book bearing the title *Minute*

articulars should be dedicated to Mr. Tate.) Lumping items together into quantities leads to more and more completely generalized conceptions of and responses to reality, which ultimately become so rarefied that the essence or value of the particular eludes entirely the generalization which is supposed to be a means of controlling or describing it. "Retroduction to American History" in *Mr. Pope and Other Poems,* "Causerie" in *Poems: 1928-1931,* and "The Ivory Tower" in Tate's newest volume, read like three sections of the same drily contemptuous, if not actually scolding, poem. "The Ivory Tower" opens with a scornful résumé of modern generalizations:

> Let us begin to understand the argument.
> There is a solution to everything: Science.
> Separate those evils strictly social
> From other evils that are eventually social
> It ends in all evils being social: Deduction.
> Is not marriage a social institution,
> *Un contrat social?* Is not prostitution
> An institution? Abolish (1) marriage (2) poverty.
> We understand everything: Dialectic.
> We who get plenty to eat and get it
> Advertising the starvation of others—
> We understand everything not including
> Ourselves: . . . .

Such generalizations, carried half-way, lead to intellectual befuddlement, moral blindness, and individual and social apathy, punctuated by quack enthusiasms and calamitous remedies. Carried to the extreme, generalizations lead to pure abstraction; and abstraction Tate seems to regard as synonymous with pure evil, perhaps because it is sheer utter disintegration, destroying past all redemption.

The historical factual element in Tate's poetry is one symptom of his revulsion from the abstract. Another and a more important symptom is his preoccupation with his relation to his family and forbears. He does not aim to approach the world as if he were an impersonal pair of scales weighing experience without bias; for what is without bias can have no experience. He aims not to abolish but to order the relations in which his blood and time

place him, for it is through his particularity, determined by these relations to particulars relatively close to him, that he must apprehend whatever particularities—that is, experiences—come close enough to permit of any relationship. I said "to order the relations" because Tate does not regard his legacies of impulse from his ancestors as unalterable, nor even as entirely acceptable. In his previous books, a number of his poems have seemingly given expression to, without defining, some element of evil or wrong inflicted which had descended in the blood of his family, to plague him in the present. Indeed, Mr. Tate at times seemed an Orestes seeking not only an expiation but also a crime. The ancestral woe never became particularized for the reader. I have sometimes thought that Mr. Tate would do readers of his poetry—not to mention lovers of good writing—a service by composing his autobiography, or an account of his ancestors—not by way of direct commentary on his poems, but for the multiplied value which two parallel statements of the same material acquire by reverberation from each other. Be that as it may, there is not so much of this private history in his new book; the interesting poem entitled "The Ancestors" records an experience which arises in many histories.

Mr. Tate's interest in the temporal sequence of particulars leads him to wrestle with Christianity, to extract what virtues he can from the angelic encounter. In this, Mr. Bishop joins him. Tate's philosophy issues logically in a religion, for a religion is a philosophy anchored to facts of some history, whether private or public. When Matthew Arnold remarked that Christian orthodoxy had tied its dogma to the alleged historic fact and now the fact was failing it, he was indeed commenting on a situation which had arisen in historical study, but not, as he thought, condemning the tactics of orthodoxy. For a religion *must* tie itself to some fact; if it remains merely inference from experience, it indeed gains a certain specious impartiality and universality, of the sort required by sceptics who ask "why were the Zulus left longer than the Jews without the Light of the World?" But the price paid for this illusory gain is that such a religion remains a Perhaps of inspiring martyrdom. And martyrdom is the best evidence of things not seen. I am not certain what the religious views of Mr. Tate are; I get the impression that he accepts the necessity of the Christian revelation without believing in its actuality. It is so that I read, for example, the first of his "Sonnets at Christmas":

This is our day. His hour of life draws near,
Let me get ready from head to foot for it
Most handily with eyes to pick the year
For small feed to reward my feathered wit;
Some men would see it an epiphany
At ease, at food and drink, others chase
Unspent argue the season's difficult case.
So: Man, dull critter of enormous head
What would he look at in the coiling sky?
But I must kneel again unto the Dead
While Christmas bells of paper white and red
Figured with boys and girls spilt from a sled,
Ring out the silence I am nourished by.

Mr. Bishop, as Tate pointed out in the Autumn number of this *Review*, is prevented by his knowledge of anthropology from committing himself to the Christian legend. "Divine Nativity" begins with Nazareth (or Bethlehem):

Wisdom that was
Before morning's span
Wheeled into space,
Love in its van,
Through what mishap
Did that Word descend
To a young girl's lap?
To what strange end?

But before the poem is over, the beast-incarnations and earthly amours of the gods of Greece are ranged on terms of imaginative equality with the incarnation of Christ, and the whole series becomes an illustration of the doctrine declared in the final stanza:

Eagle, swan or dove,
White bull or cloud,
Incarnate love
Alone is proud;
The arrogant know

In the bestial part
Overflow
Of the elated heart.

(The final point, incidentally, has been well expressed in Yeats' poem "Crazy Jane Talks with the Bishop.") The doctrine of the consubstantiation of love—that the spiritual must add to itself the physical—of course may have distinctively Christian application; but it is equally applicable to non-Christian religions, and on another plane, to the relation between the physical and the physical in sex experience. The religious indeterminacy of this poem is simply an expression of what I may call the "Golden Bough" state of mind resulting from acquaintance with the researches of Frazer and Freud. It is a state of mind in which most of us who are not orthodox are more or less involved nowdays.

Mr. Warren seems not to have joined in the search for a historic religion —at least, not explicitly in his poetry. But he shares with the other two a preoccupation which flourishes most when a fixed faith declines. All three inquire the nature of the propelling impulse which sustains the flood of human generations poured out upon the earth through interminable centuries. And not only sustains, but drives mankind restlessly on to the conquest—of lands beyond habitation, of wealth beyond use, of knowledge beyond accounting. Mr. Bishop, in "Loss in the West," says of the pioneer:

Cast out of the play
The man in the coonskin cap:
His curse is a sneer. He has had his day.

. . . . . .

Yet gaunt—bone, guts, sinews—
Something like man pursued
And still pursues

What? Wheel of the sun
In heaven? The west wind? Or only a will
To his own destruction?

(Incidentally, the rhyming of a stressed with an unstressed syllable, as in *sun-destruction,* is a device frequently employed by Bishop.) Mr. War-

ı, in his "History," a poem using for its basis of symbol the travel-nished Israelite host looking down for the first time upon the fat land Canaan before hurling themselves upon it, echoes the question, and ggests a pragmatic answer:

Recall our honor,
And descend,
We seek what end?
The slow dynastic ease,
Travail's cease?
Not pleasure, sure:
Alloy of fact?
The act
Alone is pure.
What appetency knows the flood,
What thirst, the sword?
What name
Sustains the core of flame?
We are
But doom's apparitor.
Time falls, but has no end.
Descend!

d Tate declares that life is impelled by a self-sustained impulse onward rough time; "The Meaning of Life" ends with these lines:

One's sense of the proper decoration alters
But there's a kind of lust feeds on itself
Unspoken to, unspeaking; subterranean
As a black river full of eyeless fish
Heavy with spawn; with a passion for time
Longer than the arteries of a cave.

black river" may stand as an apt image for the *élan vital* as it appears the work of these poets, for in their pages this impelling force drives manity to, at worst, sinister and, at best, ambiguous ends. The black er may dwindle brackishly to nothing, desert-defeated; it may shatter elf in a headlong tumble down a precipice; or if it slides smoothly on, loses itself at length in the cold unplumbed darkness of the sea.

Of the three poets, Tate is the most difficult; his poems seem to be trophies wrenched from the grip of reality. Comparing his latest book with his earlier ones, I do not find much change. I do not care so much for his long, rather acrid expostulations as for the shorter poems. "The Ivory Tower" and "Fragment of Meditation" are only partly digested into poetry. I prefer his poems in stricter forms; indeed, the word "strict" I have noted half a dozen times in his poetry to date, and always so stressed as to catch the attention. There could be no better word to define the quality of this poetry. One poem in the new book—"The Robber Bridegroom"—seems to be Tate's first venture into balladry. The poem sounds like an intellectualized elaboration of Scott's "Proud Maisie." The parenthetic line "(What a child! She desires her fear)" exhibits, I think, a nursery tone out of keeping with the rest of the poem, and the final line *"Little bird! Little bird!"* I find too vague in intention. A difficulty of another kind, not of the poet's creation, occurs in the following couplet from "The Mediterranean":

> Drop sail, and hastening to drink all night
> Eat dish and bowl—to take that sweet land in!

Here, the language of the poem collides with the associations which the phrase "to take in" has currently acquired in colloquial use. That is not the fault of the poem, but it is a collision to be avoided if possible. In general "The Mediterranean" is among the most successful poems in the book; others I should rank with it are the two "Sonnets at Christmas," "To the Romantic Traditionists," "Shadow and Shade," "The Ancestors," and "Pastoral." A perusal of these poems will show what a great variety is possible within strict confines. Mr. Tate will never, I suppose, publish more than relatively few lines; but these will be eminently valuable both for themselves and as an influence on other poets.

Mr. Bishop shows himself in his *Minute Particulars* to be one of Tate's debtor's. His poems are still miscellaneous in *genre,* and still bear the marks of diverse literary influences. But the influence of Eliot, fairly omnipresent in the earlier *Now With His Love,* has lessened, to be replaced, especially in such poems in the latter part of the book as "Your Chase Had a Beast in View" and "A Burning Wheel," by the influence of Tate. The change has, I think, been one for the better. There is an intimate relation between the cadences of verse and the emotional response which the poet's general

uation evokes from him. Where this situation (and consequently, the notional response) is similar for two poets, the one may properly adopt e cadences of the other, and these will flourish, transplanted, as if indig- ous. But it seems to me that Mr. Eliot's and Mr. Bishop's situations e in many respects not parallel; the common elements in the experience Bishop and Tate are likely to be much more numerous. Consequently, e influence of the latter is likely to be artistically the more congenial. Yet iot's influence still appears. What Bishop has learned by way of technical complishment from Eliot is seen at its pithiest in "Statue on a Square"; hough too many of the lines run downhill, the pregnant concision both the description and of the comment produce an interesting tension with e signs of Eliotesque languor in the lines and in the attitude of the speaker. t the contents of this collection are too copious for further extended com- nt, and too varied to be amenable to brief summarizing. There are excel- t passages in "O! Let not Virtue Seek," but I doubt whether the part of e poem devoted to the sunward-soaring aviator and the part to the astron- er—"Historian of undying dynasties"—are tied together with sufficient licitness. In general, Mr. Bishop's weaknesses seem to me to gravitate ward the end of his poems. The last five lines of "The Mother," for ample, distract me from the rest of the poem; and the excess length of e last three lines of "Counsel of Grief" seems to me to weaken the firm thm established in the rest of the poem. And the ending of "Metamor- osis" is positively banal. The long-lined blank-verse poems dealing tensibly with Roman themes, such as "An interlude" and "No More he Senator" (in this last, the reference to Roman history may be primary) ike for their cleanness of movement, and for the possible unliterary and licious pleasure of applying the parallelism with present national and ernational circumstances which they suggest. The short stripped line hich Bishop uses in many of his poems may be a movement largely caught m Yeats; but it has at all events become a wide-spread measure in modern etry, expressive of swift efficiency of imagination; and many of Bishop's st poems are in this measure. Good examples are "Ars Amatoris," "The ints," and "The Tree"—a valuable ambiguous rendering of a myth which tself as ambiguous as life and death conjoined, as they always are con- ned, in passion. The poet's pictorial bent finds its best expression not

in such conventionality as "April in Orgeval" but in the sharp lines and bitter colors of his *New England* sequence. And in the sculpturing of "A Frieze"—the movement of this poem suggests, incidentally, lessons learned from Mr. Pound—the poet achieves a surprisingly vital union between, as symbol, a visualized marble group, and, as meaning of the symbol, that supreme moment in the passion of love in which the human being, far from anchoring himself to the solidity of marble, is most in danger of losing himself in the diluvium of timelessness." Mr. Bishop's poems collectively still somewhat suggest the product of an age rather than of a man; but it is an age representing itself by its more durable qualities.

Mr. Warren reminds me in his earlier poems of John Crowe Ransom; "Pondy Woods" and "Genealogy" display a similar gift for wry balladry, macabre humor, and impromptu metaphysics. As poem follows poem, narrative fades out, and the scenery of Kentucky becomes less explicit and less bright hued. Near the end of the book occurs an exception: "The Garden: On prospect of a fine day in early autumn" is designed by its movement, diction, and substance to be a companion-piece to Andrew Marvell's summertime "Thoughts in a Garden." Though less than half as long as Marvell's, Warren's poem for its charm of language, its discreetness of allusion, and its difference-in-resemblance, deserves its intended rank as a companion-piece. With this exception, however, in these later poems

> The year dulls toward its eaves-dripping end
>
> And scent of the year's declension haunts the air,
> Where only the wind and no tardy bird may sing.

But Warren's landscapes, unlike Bishop's, pass readily into metaphysics:

> The seasons down our country have a way
> To stir the bald and metaphysic skull

and this poetry shows that the assertion is no less true of poets whose skulls are by no means bald. In contradistinction to Tate, Warren packs his metaphysics less densely into his poetry; his metaphors are likely to range in extent from a line to a stanza rather than from a few words to a line. Yet the result by no means suggests Tate diluted; for with the expansion, the energy of the verse-movement assumes a cadence more completely based on the line or the sentence, alien to the slower movement of verse in which the

ought pauses more frequently on the single epithet. A few of Warren's ems such as "History" and "Letter from a Coward to a Hero" are excepns to this generalization, being composed in varying line-lengths, often short as to force the reader to pause on the single word; and one poem, acific Gazer" has a heavy, labored, many-consonated, Hardy-esque ovement appropriate to the mood and scene it presents. But the most usual arren rhythm, at least in the latter pages of this book, is a pentameter e of varied effect but fundamentally iambic rhythm, frequently grouped o four-line stanzas. In this movement, much of his best work is done. e irregular "The Return: An Elegy" with which the book opens, is more bitious than these stanzaic poems, and impressive on the whole, though wed. For instance, I find the huddle of metaphors, each by itself emphatic,

> The pines, black, like combers plunge with spray
> Lick the wind's unceasing keel
> *It is not long till day*
> The boughs like hairy swine in slaughter squeal
> And lurch beneath the thunder's livid heel.
> The pines, black, snore . . .

ficult to digest, coming all at once, though good use is made of those taphors separately, later in the poem. But the general conception of the em, oscillating between the rival constellations of ideas dependent on

> *does my mother wake*

d on

> *The old fox is dead*
> what have I said

mpressive. The "Kentucky Mountain Farm" sequence, mostly in regu- metre, which also comes early in the book, is likewise excellent in gen- l, but contains particular flaws: "The sweet sterility of stone" offered the first of the series as an end to "little flesh and fevered bone" seems me here, whatever it may be elsewhere, a not entirely sincere statement obably because of the "sweet." But the poems in regular stanzas which ur later in the book are good both in their conception and in their detail: would single out especially "Late subterfuge," "Aged Man Surveys Past ne," "Toward Rationality," "Letter to a Friend," and "Croesus in

Autumn" for praise; and, in less austere vein, "For a Friend Who Thinks Himself Urbane."

In sum, I greatly admire Mr. Tate, though often without being sure that I understand him; I respect the scrupulousness of Mr. Bishop's endeavor, without finding myself moved as yet to sustained enthusiasm; and I greatly admire and think I understand Mr. Warren. I have but one objection to urge against all three of these poets—and against how many besides! They give us excellent lyrics, excellent narratives, excellent meditations; but what our culture chiefly needs at present is an artistic focal point, a center of unity, more *formally* evident than can be supplied by a collection of short poems. We need a structure of life and art capable of appealing both to the simple and to the learned. In other words, we not only need beliefs, of which we have almost too many (scepticism is a product of intellectual overcrowding); we also need a mythology, and a mythology credible, and capable of being embodied in poetry of *epic* magnitude. The day of leviathans is not over; or if it is, the worse for us. Such a mythology will probably have to arise on a human rather than a supernatural plane, by extension and interpretation of the stories of figures who simultaneously inhabit the realm of historic fact and of popular fancy. We have recently had one attempt to begin such mythology, but Brooklyn Bridge will not do to support such a weight—nor will, as yet, any machine. We are still, in spite of everything, human beings. Who will show us our myths?

SHORTER REVIEWS

The Road to War, by Walter Millis. Boston and New York: Houghton ifflin Company. $3.00. *The Causes of War and the Conditions of Peace,* Quincy Wright. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $2.00. *opaganda,* by Leonard W. Doob. New York: Henry Holt and Company. .00.

O. W. Riegel

NO SANE MAN can remain neutral toward the appalling fact of the reat of war, for war is the central and greatest danger of our time. The ree books reviewed here were written with full consciousness of the peril. he first two deal with war itself and the processes of involvement in war. he last deals with a form of mass coercion which, as Quincy Wright states d Walter Millis implies, is an increasingly important factor in inter- tional conflict. Taken together, they lay bare the whole anatomy of war d the will to war, and show the race of man as the prey of forces which ndemn him to an apparently endless succession of increasingly mur- rous and barbarous conflicts beside which humanitarian and cultural ogress is empty vanity.

Of the three, Walter Millis is the most indignant and the most emo- nal. It is doubtful, however, whether any other mood is longer possible r a decent, socially-minded man who has any insight into the meaning of ents during the last twenty or thirty years. *The Road to War* tells the credible story of how a pacific America was drawn by propaganda, suc- ssive waves of public hysteria, and the stratagems of diplomats, politi- ans, industrialists, financiers, and misguided pacifists, into the greatest of s foreign wars. Into its pages is packed a mass of data gleaned from the ewspapers, diaries, and conversations of the war years, yet it reads like a eat prose tragedy. The sense of the certain direction toward which the ents are leading, and the foreknowledge of the inevitable end of the his-

tory, create such a sharp impression of tragic suspense that when one reaches the simple words which mark the *dénouement* and conclusion, "America was in the war," one plunges almost with a sense of relief into the universal catastrophe.

It may be objected, as it has been, that *The Road to War* falls short in certain respects as history. Critics, especially if they happen to be of the generation which made the war, will say that it is easy to invent a thesis, and then select and prune the facts to make them fit that thesis. The actors in the war drama were surely in no position to comprehend all of the trends and significances which Mr. Millis, after nearly two decades, describes with such omniscience. The influence of Colonel House, Walter Hines Page, and Sir Edward Grey may have been mischievous, and William Jennings Bryan may have been the great unhonored prophet of the epoch, but all of these men probably acted with the best intentions according to their consciences and the information available to them, and their villainy or virtue did not appear in the clear blacks and whites of Mr. Millis's picture until after the results of their acts had been written into history.

But these objections to Mr. Millis as an historian may be somewhat beside the point. If I understand Mr. Millis correctly, while he seems to be writing on the subject of the past, he is chiefly interested in the present. He is a comparatively young man vitally concerned with the problem of war and peace, and as such, he cannot write with complete detachment about a war so close to us, and so full of meaning to us. While in some respects *The Road to War* may fall short as history, in other respects it is superior to history, for it extracts from the rush of events an essentially true picture of how war comes, and no grubbing after the last irrelevant fact is allowed to dilute the central theme. The thesis of this book is precisely what is important, and the thesis is fundamentally honest and true. Our neutrality may be lost in the next war as it was lost in the last one. No one who retraces the road to war as charted by Mr. Millis can be heedless of the wiles of propaganda, the cynicism of diplomacy, and the pitfalls of misguided or self-interested idealism. These things brought us into the last war, and they are likely to bring us into another.

How well Mr. Millis's thesis is applicable today was brought home to me in a passage from a recent review by Harold Nicolson in the London

aily Telegraph. "In this dramatic volume," he says, "Mr. Millis tries ith almost hysterical sincerity to prove that America was inveigled into e war owing to the wiles of Grey, the gullibility of House, Page and ilson, and the diabolical ingenuity of British propaganda . . . Thinking mericans are well aware how dangerous may become these gusts of senti- ental assumptions, of emotional prejudice." He then proceeds to praise nother American book which "makes it clear that there are certain direc- ns in which, if tactfully approached, America might render valuable sistance" in the collective international actions in which British interests e now closely involved. There is no better comment on this than one of r. Millis's own sentences, where he says that "one of the greatest of the ualities which have made the English a great people is their eminently ne, reasonable, fair-minded inability to conceive that any viewpoint save eir own can possibly have the slightest merit."

Professor Wright's slender volume is more quiet and temperate, but uch more shocking in its implications. Mr. Millis tells how war came to merica in 1917; Mr. Wright shows how wars have come since the begin- ng of civilization. The able but depressing summary of man's war record the chapter entitled, "Fluctuations of War and Peace," reveals war as rtually an organic necessity of society. War is useful in preserving the ling class, national unity, social solidarity, and the balance of power nong nations. Whether we like it or not, war has served constructively in uilding up our dynamic nationalistic civilization. Whether that civiliza- n, now faced with the prospect of another brutal ordeal of war, is worth e destruction of life which was required to erect it, is a question for a oral philosopher, and not for a realistic historian like Mr. Wright.

Especially disturbing is Mr. Wright's charting of the periodicity of ar. He finds that major battle concentrations have been occurring about very fifty years, with each of these major fluctuations divided into shorter cles of less lethal warfare. He suggests that it is probable that the fluctua- ns of war and peace are bound up with biological, psychological, socio- gical, and economic conditions which mankind may only very partially ntrol. His analysis of the character of recent wars shows that "the trend war has been toward greater cost, both absolutely and proportionately," nd that "war has stood out more and more as a recurrent catastrophe in vilized human existence."

If, as Mr. Wright suggests in a later place, states do not go to war because of irritation against the enemy but find an enemy because they want to go to war, it would seem somewhat idle to talk about world pacification without a complete change in the bases of our civilization and even a revolution in the fundamental nature of mankind. Yet Mr. Wright proceeds courageously to name and criticize the various techniques which have been tried or suggested for the purpose of establishing and maintaining peace. Although he is convinced that the stalemate and attrition of modern armed conflict has reduced the importance of war as an instrument of rational world politics, his analysis of the weaknesses of the various techniques which have been suggested for reducing or abolishing war, such as the different kinds of disarmament programs, sanctions, international law and organization, and the control of world public opinion for pacific ends, is so searching and acute that one is left with the hopeless feeling that mankind is not even close to a practical solution of the central problem of war. Mr. Wright concludes by professing to see some hope in the machinery of the League of Nations, with its Permanent Court of International Justice and other affiliated agencies, but in the opinion of this reviewer, the homage to the League of Nations sounds as if it were tacked on as a kind of pious afterthought, and its validity is challenged by everything that precedes it in Mr. Wright's book, as well as by the course of recent events in Europe.

The practical policies which Mr. Wright and Mr. Millis suggest for keeping the citizens of a pacific country from being slaughtered are a sad commentary on the inability of mankind to extricate itself from the blind alley into which it has been led. Mr. Wright suggests that the heavy mechanized and chemical armaments of modern nations may be a safeguard of peace since they assure long, destructive, inconclusive wars which the great powers are reluctant to undertake. The spectacle of nations exhausting their resources on military preparations and exercises to maintain a precarious peace is no more flattering to the human race than the suggestion that neutrality can only be preserved by closing and locking the national frontiers and forbidding all economic and cultural intercourse with the rest of the world. Yet the latter expedient is the one which this country seems at the moment resolved to adopt. Mr. Millis's book has undoubtedly helped to

popularize this concept of neutrality. It is unlikely that this policy will keep us out of the next holocaust, but it may have this virtue at least, that it may, as did our effort to preserve neutrality in the last World War, delay our entry so long that the war will be less destructive to American life and wealth than to the human life and resources of other belligerents.

There is an interesting hint in Mr. Wright's book that propaganda, so important a weapon to modern war-makers, might actually be developed as a moral equivalent for war. Certainly the other moral equivalents for war, such as sport and sex, have proved their inadequacy. Would it not be feasible, perhaps, to find a field of expression for national loyalties and the will to power in world propagandas made possible by the wonders of modern electrical communication? Frankly, this is no solution for such fundamental problems as that of population pressure, but in the gathering gloom one snatches for just such straws as this.

Mr. Doob is a specialist in one of the phases of the problem of social control which lies at the roots of war, and he is less interested in the moral issues of propaganda than in an effort to anatomize propaganda and explain it in terms of social psychology. The book will be chiefly of interest to experts, psychologists above all, who will find in it a valuable application, in the special field of propaganda, of a method of analysis of sociological materials. It is much more readable than most works of its type, with many passages of felicitous style and wit, but the average general reader may be discouraged by the application of a systematization of principles to dynamic material which is not nearly so obtuse or profound as Mr. Doob's terminology would seem to imply. In Parts I and II, Mr. Doob seems to be addressing an intramural audience of rather limited scope, and while the enunciation of "principles" may interest other psychologists and aid in the scientific exploration of the field, it is a question whether the explanation of propaganda processes in terms of Mr. Doob's principles, occupying the greater part of the remainder of the book, has added much to the appreciation of the propaganda problem or suggested any new ways of coping with it.

Mr. Doob indicates, however, that he is almost as alarmed about propaganda as Mr. Millis and Mr. Wright are alarmed about war. In the introduction he makes a confession of faith by declaring his belief that the

best way of combating propaganda is "talking it out of your system." To learn about propaganda, to expose it to the clear light of day, is to provide an antidote against it. This Mr. Doob ably and conscientiously does, but it is likely that the more popular exposés of specific propagandas such as those which he summarizes in Parts IV and V of his book, and as an example of which Mr. Millis's book may be cited, will be more effective as correctives than Mr. Doob's scientific formulation. His book will perform an enormous service, however, by directing the attention of psychologists, sociologists, and social historians to a field which stands in urgent need of intensive exploration and publicity.

Mr. Doob concludes his book with a suggestion for the solution of the problem of propaganda. He recognizes the increasingly important rôle which propaganda will play in human life, but he asks that society be so ordered that propaganda will be supplied only by rational experts "who understand and who are not seeking to exploit human beings." This solution, coming after an impressive documentation of the evils of propaganda and the conditions of society which make its existence inevitable, is no more plausible than the remedy for the problem of war which Mr. Wright finds in the League of Nations. Mr. Doob does not believe in it himself. "More people," he says, "simply must puncture the lies in the 'truths' which they accept, and appreciate the truths in the 'lies' which they reject . . . This should be possible—but is it?"

A Rebel War Clerk's Diary, by J. B. Jones, edited by Howard Swigget. New York: Old Hickory Bookshop. 2 vols. $5.00.

Frank Lawrence Owsley

MR. SWIGGETT, author of *The Rebel Raider* and *War Out of Niagara* has, through the Old Hickory Book Shop, presented the students of Confederate history with a new edition of J. B. Jones's *A Rebel War Clerk's Diary*. Readers of Southern history will consider this a great book, for the *Diary,* published in 1866, was so scarce that few people have had access

to it during late years. Mr. Swiggett's editing has been keen and penetrating. He brings a thorough knowledge of the period to bear upon his work; but he has obviously permitted some exceedingly careless person, and one not conversant with Confederate history, to read the proof, for there are some absurd and inexcusable typographical errors in the footnotes—though not in the text.

Jones's *Diary* is the most valuable diary of the Confederacy—though not the most beautiful or the most charming. The little man Jones was the Boswell of the Confederacy. He came to Montgomery in the spring of 1861—from New Jersey, where he had been running a secessionist paper—and announced his desire for an appointment in the War Office and his purpose to write and publish a diary of events. He obtained the place and made an entry for every day of the Civil War. So important did his diary seem to him that he appears to have felt completely justified in having both of his sons exempted from military service and placed in government employ for the sole purpose of aiding in the support of the family—support which would enable Jones to write his diary. This probably marks the diarist as an eccentric, and certainly as a man with a single-track mind: yet the student of Civil War history can easily overlook this fact.

Jones was violently prejudiced against Jews; he would have doubtless approved of Hitler. He believed that Judah P. Benjamin was a traitor, or was, to say the least, indifferent to the fate of the Confederacy. The fact that Benjamin was one of the most implacable enemies of the United States and became a British subject rather than live under the Federal flag, does not alter the value of Jones's *Diary,* for this diarist was giving expression to public opinion; and here one immediately puts his hands upon one of the weak spots of the Confederate Government: the retention in office of men whom the people—and therefore the barometer, Jones—distrusted. Jones, in common with the people of the South, hated and distrusted Assistant Secretary of War Campbell, Quarter Master General Myers, and Commissary General Northrop. His hatred for Yankees runs throughout the book. He believed them capable of any atrocity or any cunning and deceitful trick. He turns his wrath upon the Confederate-Yankee Generals Pemberton, Gustavus Smith, Lovell, and Cooper. Invariably when he mentions the name of one of the Northern men who had gone with the Confederacy he

puts "Yankee" in parenthesis. He was sure that every Yankee in the Confederate service was a traitor. The fact that he was completely wrong does not weaken the value of the diary, for he was again expressing the general opinion of the Southern people.

But Jones's *Diary* is not merely valuable because it is a barometer of contemporary public opinion and feeling: The main importance, as Mr. Swiggett, the editor of the new edition, points out, is that the diary is the only contemporary synthesis of public events in the South. From his central position in the Confederate War Office, Jones obtained an amazing perspective upon the affairs of the Confederacy. Mr. Swigget does not seem to think Jones understood fully what he saw, that he was in reality only a superb reporter. Understanding is a relative matter, of course: but I get the impression that this pathetic, undernourished, irritable clerk in the Confederate War Office had a keen historical sense. In rereading the *Diary* after many years, I am greatly impressed with Jones's selection of facts. Nothing of importance in the remotest parts of the Confederacy entirely escaped his notice, and the result is that any definitive history of the Confederacy will find most of its lines of development already marked out by this indefatigable recorder of events. There is noted much of the clash between the state governments and the Confederacy over conscription, over the right of appointment to office in the Confederate army, over the suspension of the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus,* blockade-running, impressment of supplies, negroes, and railroad equipment for military use, and the tithe or tax in kind. Jones, unlike most of his fellow Southerners, put less faith in the power of cotton to force England and France into intervention than he did in the desire of those two countries to weaken the United States and gain a stronger foothold in the Western Hemisphere. He saw very clearly that Napoleon III must either ally himself with the South or fail to establish his Mexican puppet empire. He realized with indignation that England and France were too strongly impressed by the war threats of William H. Seward; that, in fact, they were kept from a more active sympathy with the Confederacy by the implacable language of Seward and the American ministers, Charles Francis Adams and William Dayton at the Court of Saint James and the Court of Napoleon III of France. The *Diary* is one of the few unofficial records which take note of the seizure by the

American Navy of British Commerce on the high seas; and Jones gauged this situation accurately when he surmised that such an extension of belligerent rights on the seas was near to plunging the two countries into war.

Not in detail, of course, but in broad outline, Jones traces the bitter feuds between Davis and Beauregard, and Davis and Joseph E. Johnston; and the favoritism which Davis showed toward Bragg, Northrop, Myers, and Benjamin—all in the face of public opinion. Jones was one of the few persons who liked Davis. Few, if any, times does he directly criticize the Confederate President; yet the pages of the *Diary*, as they slowly unfold the feud between the executive and the two generals who ranked close to Lee in military prowess, disclose Davis as one of the pettiest men who ever held high place. Here was a man whose vanity and sensitiveness were so great that he kept two of the ablest of his generals inactive during the greater part of the war. A martinet for red tape and military punctilio where his own authority was concerned, the President was constantly meddling, and undermining the authority of Johnston and Beauregard and other leaders whom he disliked. When Beauregard was defending Charleston against a terrific siege and bombardment in 1863, Davis withdrew 10,000 men from him—that is, about one-half of his men—and sent them to the incompetent Pemberton at Vicksburg. Beauregard pleaded in vain for reinforcements. He stated that the militia and the small number of enlisted men under his command were inadequate to hold Charleston should the enemy decide to land a force. Instead of considering the situation on its merits, and either reinforcing Beauregard or explaining that the men were needed even more elsewhere, Davis had the staff in the War Office—including Jones—search for several days through all of Beauregard's reports so that the general might be caught in a discrepancy—a matter which should have been exceedingly easy to do even in the case of the conservative and accurate Lee. The discrepancy was found—several, perhaps—and, instead of sending Beauregard troops, says Jones, the President gleefully endorsed upon that general's urgent plea for more troops, the comment that the statement did not agree in numbers with a previous one, and asked secretary to note the discrepancy.

At a later stage of the Federal bombardment with long-range rifled artillery, Beauregard in desperation called for heavy guns to defend the

beleaguered city. Porcher Miles, Congressman from South Carolina, obtained a promise, so he thought, from Davis that certain long-range guns, then in Richmond and lying idle, would be sent to defend Charleston, which was being pounded to bits by the powerful Federal guns. The President did not send the guns. Finally, Miles wrote a letter to the Secretary of War urging that the long-range Brooks guns stored in Richmond be sent at once to Beauregard. He reminded the Secretary that President Davis had promised these guns. The Secretary referred the paper to the President, who, in turn, obtained a statement that there were no Brooks guns nor had there been any in Richmond.

> Mr. Miles [Jones wrote] has been *caught* by the President, after the lapse of twenty days. It is not denied even by the Secretary of the Navy, that long range guns were on hand—but there were no Brooks guns, simply. Thus, while Charleston's fate hangs trembling in the balance, and the guns are idle here, twenty days are fruitlessly spent. Mr. Miles appears to be a friend of Beauregard. Every letter that general sends to the department is sure to put twenty clerks at work in the effort to pick flaws in his accuracy of statement.

Jones gives numerous accounts of this type of sophistry by which Davis tripped up Beauregard and Johnston and other personal enemies. One would have had to go to Vance of North Carolina or Brown of Georgia to find such a petty and vindictive spirit. As a matter of fact, the reader is convinced that President Davis was not the Davis of either pre-war or of post-war days. Personally, I am convinced that the Confederate president was mentally unbalanced by the physical suffering through which he was going and by the sorrow at the loss of his little boy who was killed in a fall from the front porch of the White House. One cannot read this diary without feeling that there was considerable truth in Jones's bitter exclamation that "never before did such little men rule such a great people."

In this careful record of events preserved by the sour but conscientious Jones one can trace the decline of public morale and the growth of war weariness. Oh! for peace, where he could cultivate his little garden in the evening of his life, with his family safely about him! Oh! for the ending of the slaughter, on both sides, of the flower of the nation's manhood. One feels this weariness of soul and body creeping into the diary and taking the

place of the passionate hatred for Yankees of the earlier pages. Not that Jones lowers his flag. He, like the bulk of Southern people, sank exhausted and benumbed. He died on February 4, 1866, less than ten months after the fall of the Confederacy—probably as a result of chronic malnutrition—without seeing his diary published.

The South Looks at Its Past, by Benjamin Burks Kendrick and Alex Mathews Arnett. $2.00. *90° in the Shade,* by Clarence Cason. $2.50. *Backwoods America,* by Charles Morrow Wilson. $2.50. *Cabins in the Laurel,* by Muriel Early Sheppard. $3.00. *The Collapse of Cotton Tenancy,* by Charles S. Johnson, Edwin R. Embree, and W. W. Alexander. $1.00. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.

H. C. Nixon

THE FLOW of non-fiction books and articles on the South and Southern trends has become a voluminous stream. The agrarianism, the traditionalism, the industrialism of this region have been subjects for comment by both academic and popular writers. Southern social scientists are exploring the problems of poverty, farm tenancy, race relations, and politics. The history of this section and the lives of its past leaders are being reëxamined and comparatively reappraised in the light of glaring shortcomings in American economy and society as a whole. Southern culture, broadly or narrowly considered, is being passed in review.

Southern writing has become critical with reference to the social scene, and the criticism has mounted and ridden vigorously in several directions. Witness, for instance, *Culture in the South,* with thirty-one contributors, and *I'll Take My Stand,* with its twelve. The debate between the "agrarians" and their opponents is to be won by neither, for the forces of Southern life are not to be interpreted or synthesized in terms of "agrarianism" versus "industrialism." Such a debate is evidence, however, that there is a South, more or less differentiated and conscious, and that much can be said about it.

The South is being studied factually and interpreted frankly. Not a few of these students are Southerners who look upon the rural society

and the new industrialism of the South with a perspective distorted neither by roses nor smoke. *The South Looks at Its Past* reflects the critical sympathy of Professors Kendrick and Arnett. As historians they appreciate the merits and defects of the Old South, recognize the damaging effects of the Civil War and Reconstruction on the traditional culture of Dixie, and discount the prosperity-worship of the slightly industrial New South, for which the North has set the pattern of standardized conformity. They are warm-hearted realists who know the reality of tradition, the wastefulness of Southern agriculture, and the shortcomings of the AAA. They accept much of the criticism of *I'll Take My Stand,* but make a plea for "the new regionalism" with a "revival of agrarian culture and its reintegration in the national pattern." Only the hint of a program is given, but a historical interpretation can not be expected to elaborate on planning for the future. The essay is earnest and constructive in tone.

Clarence Cason's *90° in the Shade* is neither earnest nor constructive but packed with devastating wise-cracks, clever generalizations, and colorful anecdotes. It is fair in the sense that it lets nothing escape. Its targets are plantation society, religious fundamentalism, the major sport of politics, Southern-style fascism, "diverse aspects of the color problem," labor conditions, and so on. It makes much of that kind of Southerner who "can, by nature, be happy with a hole in his pants." As the title implies, the loose theme of the book is, that the Southern climate has "the effect of creating a passivity which renders the inhabitants of the region much too willing to accept conditions as they are, be they right or wrong." Climate and the Negro, according to this view, condition Southern culture.

90° in the Shade is correctly called a "psychograph of the South." It is also a psychograph of the late author, who was born and reared in Alabama, went north for further training and experience, and returned to his native state to feed the South revisited into his scintillating typewriter. He seems to hover between an agricultural old South and an industrial new South, without quite making up his mind fully to champion or condemn either. He is a sort of H. L. Mencken with kidgloves, alternating slaps with pats. He is himself about as passive as his South, limiting himself to description and analysis and disavowing any intention of uplift or influence. He confesses to the "pleasure of talking about the region," and has the

consciousness of Montaigne that an author is himself the groundwork of his book. He contrasts the South, which he knows and loves, with energetic Wisconsin, which he knows and admires, not forgetting the differences in climate as he has personally experienced them. He brilliantly incarnates the upper middle-class South tending to come of age, intellectually, but not yet of age.

Backwoods America is an objective assembly of frontier facts by one who has experienced many of them. Mr. Wilson assumes with relish that his native "Ozarkia provides a splendid laboratory from which to study the true living ways and resources of the nation's peasant domain." He writes, in a general way, of that up-country hill-billy or mountain yeoman who "can 'set' on the sunny side of his porch and whittle," who has the luxury of "idle time, without chronic unemployment." He gives intimate and descriptive sketches on such subjects as rural humor, religious gatherings, folk beliefs, backwoods language, ballads, country store-keeping, the country doctor, and moonshiners, with a concluding comment on the new style frontiersman. He has picked up many catchy sayings, born of the soil, along with realistic observations. Without nostalgia or spirit of reform, he gives a simple picture, somewhat in mountain-quilt fashion, of the backwoods before any rural rehabilitation or resettlement program effected any change. He writes good description but does not go deeply into human detail or cultural meanings.

In *Cabins in the Laurel* Mrs. Sheppard has undertaken to delineate ways, characters, and incidents of mountain life with a detailed concreteness and exactness. She is Southern by adoption. The wife of a mining engineer stationed in western North Carolina, she has made herself at home in the Toe River Valley, of which she writes. Supplementing her rich human contacts and observations with appropriate bits of historical and scientific information, she compresses description, story, and native narrative verse into a documentary cross-section of Toe River culture. She presents life raw and real, with its liquor drinking, fighting and murder trials, mining, farming and fireside industries, snuff dipping and church shouting, singing, string music and dancing, cooking and eating, and old-fashioned speech. She reproduces too much slightly monotonous mountain verse, and hands out other lore already available. Her book, done after the manner of an

enthusiastic amateur, has one hundred and twenty-eight photographic illustrations by Bayward Wooten, who also illustrated *Backwoods America.* One may identify the same moonshine still as photographed for both books. Was it an Ozark or a Blue Ridge find?

The Collapse of Cotton Tenancy, by three authors, is different in scope and purpose from the other items in this review, but it may be classed with them as severely realistic comment on Southern social conditions. It is an effective preliminary statement, based on extensive field studies and statistical surveys. It analyzes tenant conditions in the depression and under the crop-control program. It emphasizes the fact that white tenants in the cotton country now outnumber Negro tenants by 300,000. It recommends a governmental homestead program to check and reduce tenancy.

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